

# Love from My Dominant Boss

## Chapter 81

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Michael threw a cold glance at me and snapped, "Make sure this is the first and last time. If it happens again, you will be dismissed right away!"

I glared at the domineering man who stormed into his room, slamming the door behind him. A wave of fury surged within me as I snorted inwardly. Pfft! He's obviously overreacting by putting me in a tight spot! Other colleagues had similarly received flowers from their boyfriends previously, but he never commented on anything or asked them to throw the flowers away. What's with the double standard, huh? How could he just lash out at me and humiliate me in front of the entire office? Oh, he's gone too far this time!

The moment Michael slammed the door of his office, Millie turned to look at me sympathetically and said in a hushed tone, "Anna, are you alright? Well, what was that all about! Mr. Shaw scared the crap out of me when he shouted at you earlier..."

"Everyone has a temper, and he should know that he's annoying as well!" I pursed my lips and harrumphed. My mood was utterly spoilt by what happened a while ago.

Millie looked at the bouquet of roses which was in a pitiful state at the moment and sighed. "What a pity. Your boyfriend must have spent a lot for such a big bouquet of roses!"

My anger escalated at the sight of my bouquet of roses, which ended up in the trashcan. It reminded me how Michael reprimanded me in front of all my colleagues a while ago. Apart from feeling embarrassed, I was overcome by utter indignation. Did he realize that he's just making a fuss out of nothing?

I shifted my gaze away from the bouquet of roses and talked myself into putting the disgruntling matter out of my mind. "Millie, let's just drop the frustrating subject."

As a result of the dramatic events that morning, I was down in the dumps the whole day. I could scarcely breathe as Michael assigned me piles of tasks and emphasized that all must be completed on the same day itself.

Consequently, I was occupied by the tasks the whole day and even had to skip my lunch. When my colleagues called it a day and left one by one in the evening, I was still rushing to get a few copies of the documents done.

After throwing a glance in the direction of Michael's room, I focused on my work again, hoping to get it done soon.

It was already an hour later when I finally completed my tasks. After heaving a sigh of relief, I stretched my body and tidied the documents on my desk. I glanced at Michael's room instinctively. To my surprise, the lights were still on, indicating that he had not yet left.

Initially, I thought of going over to greet him before stepping out of the office. Nevertheless, I changed my mind as snippets of the dramatic event in the morning flashed across my mind. I took my handbag and left without hesitation.

The moment I stepped out of the office building, a familiar figure came into view. My heart skipped a bit when it turned out to be Yuval, and his car was parked not far away from the building. Taking a deep breath, I tried to cool myself down and make my way toward him.

"Yuval, what brings you here?" I smiled at him and asked curiously.

Yuval's lips curved into a smile as he replied gently, "We haven't seen each other for quite some time. Besides, you're always working overtime lately, so it suddenly crosses my mind to pay you a visit."

In an instant, I was overcome by a sense of guilt. I explained to him in embarrassment, "I'm sorry for turning you down numerous times; I was swamped with work for the past few days."

In actual fact, I was just telling a white lie to turn him down nicely. I knew that I hadn't been working overtime, slaving away at the office until late night. It was just that I had this thing going on with Michael, so I couldn't date Yuval at the same time.

Yuval, please forgive me for not being truthful to you, as I don't wish to hurt your feelings. It's never my intention to treat you as a spare!

"It's alright. I'm here, aren't I? Anyway, you must be hungry, so let's go for dinner."

I was momentarily stunned at Yuval's invitation. After a brief hesitation, I nodded my head and kept my mouth shut.

Just then, Yuval's hand reached out for mine and held it tightly.

I was instantly repulsed by his touch and shrugged his hand off apprehensively. We had actually known each other for quite some time, yet we never held each other's hand so far.

Yuval's smile froze in an instant. Then, he apologized awkwardly, "Anna, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make you feel uncomfortable."

Yuval was a typical gentleman. Even though it was my fault, he still made the first move to apologize to me.

"I'm sorry for overreacting. It's probably because I haven't been in a relationship for quite some time. Thus, it just feels a bit awkward when you hold my hand all of a sudden," I explained sheepishly while lowering my gaze.

"It's alright. I understand. But we are dating each other at the moment, so it's quite odd if we can't even hold hands." Yuval smiled again as he said placidly.

Despite his calm demeanor, I could sense that he was stifling his displeasure. After all, it was only normal for any other men to be displeased if they could not even hold hands with their other half. To me, he was already reasonable and understanding.

After hesitating for a short while, I gazed at him as I took the initiative to hold his hand. Anna Garcia, you can do it! It's not a big deal. After all, haven't you held hands with boys when you were young?

This was the first time I tried to draw the gap between us. As expected, I could not feel any sparks, yet Yuval's face lit up at once.

Both of us were hand-in-hand as we walked toward his car. Not long after we hopped into it, he sped off to a restaurant where he had reserved a table earlier.

When we were seated face-to-face in the restaurant, the atmosphere somehow felt a bit awkward. No doubt both of us had mentioned marriage when we first entered into this relationship, yet I could not find any topics to chat about right then.

Fortunately, the steak that we ordered was served in a while. To conceal my awkwardness, I lowered my head and pretended to be busy cutting my steak.

When I was about to take a mouthful of the steak, Yuval placed his plate in front of me. He had cut his steak nicely into even pieces!

"Just take mine. I've had it sliced up just for you." Yuval smiled at me with a gleam of gentleness in his eyes.

I was really touched by his thoughtfulness. Just like any other woman, I yearned to be with a thoughtful man. Even though I had no feelings for him, I made up my mind that he would be an ideal spouse.

“Thank you,” I thanked him and started savoring the steak.

When I was halfway eating, Yuval called my name abruptly. I looked up and saw him lifting his glass of red wine to clink with mine.

I wouldn't usually drink due to my low tolerance for alcohol. Nonetheless, I did not turn him down this round. I lifted my glass of wine, clinked glasses with him, and gulped down.

But perhaps I was drinking too fast, I choked on the wine. Subsequently, I coughed non-stop till tears trickled down my cheeks.

“Anna, are you alright?” Yuven asked me in great concern and handed me a tissue.

“N-Nothing... I'm just not used to drinking wine.” I tried my best to stifle my cough and squeezed out a sentence.

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As I was still coughing non-stop, Yuval approached me and patted my back gently to soothe my cough. At that very moment, both of us looked exactly like a loving couple. Again, he warmed my heart with his thoughtfulness and gentleness. Even though I did not fall for him, I guessed I could lead a happy life by marrying a thoughtful and caring man like him. Who knows? Maybe I will learn to love him as time passes by...

After I had finally stopped coughing, I raised my head and smiled thankfully at him. To be honest, it did make me like him a bit more. Even so, it was still a vast distance away from love.

“Why didn't you tell me that you can't drink? If I knew it, I surely wouldn't let you,” he mumbled guiltily.

“Don't worry. I'm fine now,” I consoled him.

Right then, I caught a glimpse of a familiar figure and froze. In a split second, my eyes widened in disbelief. Michael Shaw! Why on earth is he here?

As a surge of anxiety started to well up in my heart, I looked at him nervously.

“Anna, what’s wrong? Are you alright?” Sensing something awry, Yuval looked at me quizzically with knitted brows.

I did not reply him, as if I was oblivious to his question. Meanwhile, Michael was glaring at me with a grim look on his face. I shuddered as his eyes were blazing with growing rage.

Yuval followed my gaze and turned to have a look inquisitively. The moment his eyes caught Michael’s figure, there was a sudden change in his expression. Instantaneously, his smile faded from his face.

“Anna, are you sure that both of you are just employee and boss?” He looked intently at me and asked doubtfully.

My eyes started to blink uncontrollably as a sense of guilt swept over me. I recalled how Michael dragged me away before Yuval’s eyes previously. However, I was not sure what he intended to do with his sudden appearance. Thus, I did not know how I should answer Yuval.

As Michael advanced toward us, he never shifted his intimidating gaze away from me. The anxiety in my heart intensified as he was getting nearer to us. I wondered what he would say to us later! He’d better mind his words!

I had the urge to flee the place at once, yet I restrained myself from it as I clenched onto the sides of my blouse nervously. If Michael blurted out the relationship between both of us, I would not know how to justify it to Yuval!

At the sight of the enraged man who was approaching us, Yuval furrowed his brows. Nevertheless, he still politely stretched out his hand and greeted Michael with a courteous smile. “How are you? Nice to meet you again.”

Michael, on the other hand, was purposely ignoring Yuval’s outstretched hand while sparing him a cold glance. It was just like how it was during their first encounter previously. His rude attitude implied that he did not give a damn about Yuval at all.

Yuval stole a glance at me, humiliated and infuriated. Needless to say, he could sense Michael’s intense hostility toward him.

“Mr. S-Shaw, why are you here?” I stammered as I forced myself to look into Michael’s blazing eyes.

"In case you've forgotten, this is a restaurant, and I can have a meal here just as much as you could," he scoffed.

At that moment, he was just about two paces away from me. Intimidated by his imposing aura, I shifted my gaze away from him hastily and dared not have any eye contact with him again.

"I didn't mean that. It's just... I mean, what a coincidence." I smiled embarrassingly and tried to sound casual. Even so, I felt a rush of mixed emotions creeping into my heart. While trying to stay calm, I was displeased with the man's sudden appearance and could not help but feel suspicious about that. Is he stalking me? After all, what are the odds that we're all here at this restaurant at this time?

"Well, what do you know... It really is! Seems to me like fate really likes bringing us together whenever you're out dating with your boyfriend," Michael mocked, not forgetting to emphasize the word "dating." I could even see the flickers in his blazing eyes; he was undoubtedly boiling with anger at that moment.

I knew that he was green with envy whenever I was on a date with Yuval. After all, he was a particularly possessive and self-centered man. Nonetheless, I could not just go all out since both of us were just friends with benefits. I had to think of my future too!

"It seems so... Though I almost thought that you were stalking me!" I mustered my courage and mocked him. If I continued to give in to him without refuting, Yuval would surely sense that something was amiss.

As a matter of fact, I knew that Michael had been following me. That was the only reason why we would always bump into each other whenever I went on dates with Yuval.

"Me stalking you?" he questioned me in an icy-cold tone. His eyes were as cold as the abyss.

"Mr. Shaw, don't take it too seriously! I was just joking. But looking at how you've taken it, Mr. Shaw, was I perhaps correct?" I scoffed and looked into Michael's eyes provocatively. To avoid Yuval from being suspicious of me, I was determined to put on a brave front.

"Well, aren't you full of yourself, Anna Garcia? Who do you think you are, that I would stalk you?" The prideful man gritted and snickered as his gaze turned even colder. For a second, I even thought that he would throw a punch at me for provoking him.

"Mr. Shaw, I'm sorry for being blunt. You are right. Since there's nothing between us, of course, you wouldn't have followed me. It might be just a

coincidence!" I heaved a sigh of relief at Michael's mocking words. That was what I had expected. I'm sure Yuval will not be suspicious of me again as Michael's words kind of clarified that there was nothing between us.

Nevertheless, another wave of anxiety swept over me that instant as I thought of something. Looks like I'm putting myself in hot soup once again. I bet he wouldn't easily let me off for challenging him in front of Yuval!

Michael was no ordinary man. It struck him almost at once that I was tricking him into clarifying that there was nothing between him and me. His face became grimmer, yet he did not utter any words. However, it was as if I would perish at any moment from the burning flames in his eyes.

I turned away deliberately and pretended that I was unaware of his escalating anger. After all, he won't be able to do anything since we're in public. He warned me earlier to keep mum about the relationship between us, didn't he?

"Yuval, let's continue eating. I'm starving!" I intentionally nudged Yuval's arm and sounded coquettish. Knowing that I had unintentionally disregarded him while bickering with Michael, I tried to cheer him up by shifting my attention back to him.

Michael clenched his fists till veins protruded on the back of his hands, which scared me. If I wasn't assured that he intended to keep our relationship a secret, I guessed he would really teach me a lesson then and there.

"Alright." My words seemed to have eased Yuval's displeasure right away. His lips curved into a gentle smile again as he cut some smaller pieces from his steak and placed them on my plate. He was apparently showing off to Michael how close we were with each other. I could not resist but chuckle inwardly. Ah! Men are all the same. Even such a good-natured gentleman like Yuval still has his pride that can't be challenged by others.

## **Love from My Dominant Boss**

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Infuriated by Michael's attitude a while ago, I decided to dampen his pride. Hence, I put on an attractive smile and locked gazes with Yuval as I thanked him coyly.

Even though Michael remained silent, I could sense that his icy-cold aura had gradually intensified.

“Ah! It looks like most of the seats here are occupied. Since I’m by myself, it’s easier for me to sit together with both of you. You don’t mind, do you?” Michael said casually and took the seat next to me.

The moment he sat down next to me, I was engulfed by a tense atmosphere. I really disliked him sitting close to me. Besides, the whole situation was already awkward enough.

The slight change in Yuval’s expression was unmistakable. He frowned again the moment Michael sat closely next to me, but he remained silent. I could not help but pity him in a way. Nobody would be able to smile if their dates were interrupted by another man. Michael Shaw has really crossed the line this time!

Suppressing my frustration, I ignored Michael deliberately and avoided sparing any glance at him. My instinct told me that he would not let me off if I dared to mock him in his face again. Thus, I tried to finish my meal as soon as possible, so I would be able to slip away with Yuval at once.

“Anna, have you received my bouquet of flowers? Do you like it?” Yuval looked up at me abruptly and asked gently.

In a split second, I stiffened and almost choked on the steak in my mouth. *Crap!* How should I tell him that this monster sitting right next to me had ordered me to throw them away?

After taking a sip of water and swallowing the steak in my mouth, I forced a smile and replied, “Yeah, I received it this morning.”

“Why didn’t you bring it along with you just now? Did you leave it at your place in the office?” I was dumbfounded when he asked again. Should I tell him the truth? How will he react if I tell him that I was forced to throw the bouquet of roses away?

“It’s in the dumpster now! She threw it away.” Michael answered coldly before I could make up my mind.

My heart thumped wildly in my chest, and I saw that the smile on Yuval’s face froze.

“Yuval, let me explain! I-I did not throw it away on purpose... I was forced to do so to comply with the restrictions of our company. We are not supposed to receive any deliveries of personal items during working hours. Thus, I had no choice but to throw it away...” I explained incoherently.

Even if I knew that my explanation might not sound conceivable, it was the best excuse that I could think of at the moment. After all, I was still being frank partially as Michael actually instructed me to throw it away so as not to affect my work in the office.

Yuval squinted his eyes and looked at me doubtfully. At that moment, I could sense that he did not believe my words. He's a lawyer, after all, so I'm not surprised.

"Yuval, I was telling the truth. I'm really sorry. I didn't mean to throw the flowers away..." I looked at him apologetically and kept mumbling. At the same time, I rebutted Michael repeatedly inwardly. He was obviously putting on a show to drive a wedge between Yuval and me. Since both of us were not too invested in this relationship yet, Michael could effortlessly cause our relationship to come to an end.

Michael smirked with a sense of schadenfreude in his eyes. Knowing that he was stirring trouble purposively, I almost burst a blood vessel and lashed out at him. Ugh! This man is really stepping on my toes!

Yuval glanced obliquely at Michael and looked at me suspiciously again. I only had myself to blame for this. If I were him, I would surely feel the same.

"It's alright. I understand about it and won't deliver flowers to your office anymore. I'll just give it to you in person so you won't get in trouble." I heaved a silent sigh and was thankful that Yuval was so understanding.

At the same time, I was overcome by a sense of guilt. Michael's countenance and body language were obvious indeed. Even a dull-witted person could sense that I seemed to have an unusual relationship with Michael, what's more, an observant lawyer like Yuval.

The smile vanished from Michael's face within seconds as his face turned grim again. I bet he must be feeling dejected as his words did not manage to provoke Yuval as expected.

Feeling suffocated by the tense atmosphere, I had completely lost my appetite. I hurriedly finished my meal and left the restaurant hastily with Yuval.

I was relieved as Michael did not stop me from leaving. Nevertheless, I kept wondering if he would look for me later that night. Based on how I had challenged the vindictive man's pride a while ago, I was worried that he would come and settle the debt with me later.

When both Yuval and I stepped out of the restaurant, darkness had fallen. In Yuval's car, I stared off into the distance out of the window, my mind preoccupied with my thoughts.

"Anna, I heard that you moved out of Natalie's place two days ago. Do you mind if I ask why?" Yuval broke the silence by asking warily.

Upon hearing Natalie's name, I lowered my head sorrowfully. Recalling the reason I moved out from her place out of a sudden, a surge of mixed emotions welled up within me again.

"Just a minor conflict, nothing serious," I replied placidly and did not intend to tell him the exact reason.

I was actually trying to be protective of Natalie by keeping mum about John. She would certainly be hurt if others knew about it and started gossiping. Even if Yuval was introduced to me by Natalie, he was just a friend of hers. Besides, they were not considered that close.

"Natalie is a forthright young lady. No doubt she really treats you as her close friend and is really concerned about you." Yuval glanced at me and commented. I was not sure if there were any hidden meanings behind his words. Even so, something crossed my mind upon hearing them.

Ever since I moved out from Natalie's place, we had stopped contacting each other. Should I give her a call?

We had been close friends for so many years, and it was not worth having our friendship strained just because of a jerk.

"Yuval, thanks for your reminder. Now I know what I'm supposed to do. Natalie is very important to me, and I really cherish my friendship with her." I turned and smiled at him.

"Where are you staying now? Let me give you a lift. It's getting late, and you need to wake up early for work tomorrow." The moment Yuval offered to send me home, I froze. If I was still staying at Natalie's place, there would not be any issues but I wasn't. No way! I can't let him find out that I'm staying at Michael's place at the moment!

"Hmm... it's alright. You can just drop me off here. I can walk back home myself since it's just a stone's throw away. I wouldn't want to cause any inconvenience since it's not on your way." I tried to turn him down by giving an excuse.

"Do you really think that I'll do that? It's late, and you are all by yourself. I don't mind driving a bit further. It's safer that way. And don't worry, as

we'll be reaching soon," Yuval protested and looked at me in bewilderment.

As a typical gentleman, I was not surprised that he insisted on sending me home. When I used to stay at Natalie's place, he never failed to send me to the doorstep every time after our date.

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"Don't worry about it. My place is just walking distance from here, and I could really use a walk, anyway."

I insisted on getting out of the car; I had to. As much as I wanted to be with Yuval, I still couldn't cut Michael off either, and that thought alone disgusted me.

I knew I had to make a choice sooner or later. After all, to swing between two men wasn't something I could accept.

"Hey, but it's already so late. It's not safe for you to walk home alone."

Yuval slowed down as he was deeply concerned.

"It's okay. My place is literally just a stone's throw away, and I'll be home before you know it," I persisted. My mind was in a muddle since dinner. How I wished I could tell Yuval everything right then, but my dignity held my tongue back.

"Well... If you insist. But text me once you get home, okay? Or else I'll be worried."

He stopped his car and looked at me worriedly.

"Sure thing."

I gave a gentle reply and got out of the car.

Yuval gave me one last glance before he drove off.

As I walked on the sidewalk, I thought to myself. Should I be honest about my current situation? It's unfair for him to be tangled in this mess of a relationship.

However, along the entire journey, no decisions were made. I admit that I was a selfish person as I couldn't make up my mind, nor did I know what to do.

Finally, I was back at Birchwood. Once I pushed the door open, someone brusquely pulled me into the darkness, and before I had the time to react, the same person pushed me up against the wall.

He was so strong that I almost screamed in pain. Stunned, I glared at the culprit who'd just ambushed me. It was Michael.

"What's wrong with you? You're hurting me!"

His grip on my wrists got tighter and tighter.

"Where did you go after you left the restaurant? What took you so long to get back? What are you doing with Yuval!"

Michael started questioning my whereabouts.

I wasn't in a good mood in the first place, and his rough interrogation only exacerbated the situation.

"What does that have to do with you? Do I have to report to you my every single move?"

He absolutely ticked me off. Who are you to talk to me in such a manner? For goodness' sake, you flipped my life upside down!

My guard was constantly up, worrying what if someone found out about us. Couldn't I just enjoy whatever freedom that was left for me?

"Anna, don't forget who you belong to. In the next six months, you're mine. I have all the rights to know what you're doing."

It was apparent that my brawl didn't affect him at all. The way he looked at me and the things he spoke was as despotic as it'd always been.

This man was absolutely self-absorbed. He only cared about himself and never for others.

"You sure I'm yours? In bed, yes, but once the business is done, we become strangers, don't we?" I gave out a limp huff. This relationship with Michael had been tortuous, draining my energy day after day.

I described our relationship so succinctly that Michael couldn't respond but blinked repetitively.

He knew perfectly what we are – he, the puppeteer, and I, the puppet – whose sole purpose was to fulfill his needs. No man would want to see the woman he slept with was with another man, even after they were done and dusted. What more someone so proprietorial like Michael?

“Anna, you’re mine in bed and out of bed. Have you turned a deaf ear to everything I’ve told you? Why are you still so close with Yuval!”

It was amazing how he justified his twisted principles so boldly.

“You’re saying that I’m yours, but why didn’t you tell Yuval that in his face? Michael, we’re selfish, and we belong to two different worlds. Six more months, and we’re done.”

Going against Michael outrightly wouldn’t diffuse the situation. That was why I decided to talk some sense into him, hoping he could understand my circumstances.

As I told him, we are from two different worlds. He was handsome, loaded, and powerful. Tons of pretty ladies wouldn’t think twice about marrying him. If he was done playing around and wanted to settle down, things could be arranged with the snap of a finger. Sadly, I didn’t have the luxury to do so.

Being a small-town girl, I didn’t have a wealthy family to back me up. Plus, it was about time for me to get married. Dad and Mom’s hopes for me to do so only added more pressure to my already bone-weary life.

All I wanted now was to marry someone whom I could rely on. That man didn’t have to love me as long as he was willing to lend me some support when I needed it.

To survive in a bustling metropolitan was tough enough. Now not only did I have to do that, sending money back home and resolving issues created by Steven had become my responsibility as well. How I wished that there was someone I could lean on.

Michael could see that I was deliberately pushing his buttons. “So, Anna, what you’re saying is you want me to announce our relationship?” He looked at me suspiciously.

“Anna Garcia, you’d better not come up with any sneaky ideas, or I’ll make you pay for it. You’re just someone I sleep with. We’re not in a relationship!”

He stared at me as his words morphed into hot air and gushed onto my face, sending chills down my spine.

When I looked back into those stoic eyes, I flicked my eyes away. He was so overpowering that I didn't dare to look back, despite the seething rage deep down inside me.

"Mr. Shaw, that's not what I meant. I'd never want our affairs to be known to the public. Do you think anyone with the right mind would willingly show off their black mark to the public?"

I finally mustered my last straw of courage and fought back. I had enough of his nonsense. Undeniably, some women would give their all just to have a go with him, but that didn't apply to every single woman.

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He was taken aback by my deriding remark as I was always soft-spoken and composed in front of him.

"Are you calling me a disgrace in your life? I dare you to repeat yourself!"

His grip got even tighter than before, and my wrists hurt so badly that I almost shrieked. Regardless, I wasn't going to back down anymore. No matter how weak he thought I might be, I had my dignity to defend.

He assumed that I was this gold-digger who wanted all the fortune and fame. If I gave in, it simply meant that I agreed to all his assumptions.

"It's gonna be the same, Michael Shaw. You're the utmost disgrace in my life!"

Tonight, he'd put me on the warpath. Even a weakling had its limits, and this time he'd gone too far!

As soon as I spoke, his chest pumped up and down in fury.

"Anna, bear in mind that you started it. Have you forgotten that you seduced me for two hundred thousand?"

I froze instantly; he was right. It was me who had seduced him and climbed onto his bed for Dad's operation money. I needed it by hook or by crook, but little did I know that my cynical plan would lead to this.

Only now did I realize that my decision then was a terrible mistake. I should've looked for other means, sold my organs, anything but seeking help from the devil.

Since we started this "relationship," I couldn't even live my life the way it was. Was all this misery worth that two hundred thousand?

"Michael, can you show me some mercy? I'm beat. Do you know how much pressure I have to bear?" I sighed, and my tough shell cracked. "At the end of the day, I'm just a woman, and I need someone to lean on. My Dad is sick. He needs a sum of money every month for his treatment. Carrying the weight of the whole family on my shoulders is killing me already. Let me go, please, I beg you. I'll find ways to pay you back."

At that moment, settling the bill was the only idea I could come up with to cut ties with him. If I didn't owe him anything, I wouldn't have to continue this shameful affair.

I wasn't fishing for pity, but just lamenting.

However, all he did was look at me blankly, somewhat confused.

He stopped lashing his wrath at me soon after that. Since I told him that I was going to pay him back, he should be more than willing to let me go... Right?

The man remained silent and let go of my hand. Those dark eyes of his were affixed to mine. The things I'd said all came from my heart, and I was just hoping that he could see the pain and hardship that I was going through.

Weirdly, instead of feeling relieved, I felt a void in me after pouring my heart out.

He gave me another glance, turned around, and left.

I only got back to my senses when the door gave out a loud thump after he walked out of the house.

That was it. He left. I supposed we were done.

If that was the case, I'd be able to face Yuval with an open heart and not feel sorry for my dishonesty. I could finally work on our relationship without guilt.

The thought of it put a smile on my face, yet I felt a tinge of sadness. Was it because of Michael?

No freakin' way! I couldn't believe that I thought that I probably had feelings for him.

Something must have gone haywire in my head!

The only feeling I was supposed to have towards this man should be enmity. How was it possible that I was falling for him? I'd never fall for him!

As I lay on my bed, my mixed emotions got me tossing and turning. The way he looked at me right before he left kept appearing in my head, and I barely slept a wink that night.

The next day at the company, I bumped into Michael at the entrance. After what happened last night, I felt awkward, and thus, hurried past him.

He responded similarly, giving me a brief sidelong glance, and walked straight into his office.

For the next few days, we were like strangers. It was still awkward every time we ran into each other, but at least our affair had come to an end, and that was relieving.

One day when I was buzzing at work, my phone rang. The word "Mom" on the screen made me scowl.

Every time she called, it was either about my relationship or Dad needed more money for his medical treatment. Tensing up became a reflex to calls from home.

Nevertheless, I still had to pick it up.

"Hi, Anna. Are you working?"

"Yeah, I'm still at the office. What's up? You usually don't call at this hour."

I dived straight into business.

"Um... nothing much actually. I just wanna know what your boyfriend does. He seems pretty loaded."

I nearly jumped out of my skin. I'd never told her anything about Yuval, so how did she find out?

He was living quite comfortably, but I wouldn't call that loaded.

“Mom, how did you know about it? We aren’t stable yet, and that’s why I haven’t told you.”

I was still contemplating whether to tell her about Yuval. And there she was, asking about him.

“Tell me, Anna. How far did you get with him?”

She totally ignored my explanations and went on with another question.

“Mom! Can you just chill? It’s been only two months. What do you expect?”

I was speechless. I myself wasn’t even sure if things would work out between Yuval and me, so I didn’t know why my mom was that anxious.

“How can I possibly chill? Look at you. You’ve passed your prime, and you’re still single. Any mom would be on tenterhooks!”

## Love from My Dominant Boss

### Chapter 86

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Mom let out a deep sigh and continued her blabbering.

Meanwhile, I stayed on the line, unaffected by her rambling. Whenever she went on and on over the phone, I wished that I could just hang up.

“Anna, I quite like this boyfriend of yours. He knew that Dad’s undergoing medical treatment, and it’s a delightful surprise that he gave us a hundred thousand.”

My eyes almost popped out of my sockets. Did Mom just say that Yuval gave them a hundred thousand?

I’d never mentioned anything about my family to him, let alone Dad’s health condition. Thus, I couldn’t wrap my head around this.

“Mom, what’s going on? There’s no way he’s giving us money.”

Although I had a feeling that Yuval fancied me, to pay for my Dad’s medical fees was simply beyond the bounds of possibility.

“Well, he just did. He paid for your Dad’s operation before, didn’t he? Aren’t you a lucky girl to have such a wealthy boyfriend like him?”

Her words shocked me to the core. Wait... wasn't it Michael who paid for the operation? Since when did it become Yuval? What the heck is happening?

Right at that moment, I was spiraling down the rabbit hole. Someone had given my parents a hundred thousand for nothing? Could it possibly be Michael? Nah, it can't be him. Why would he do that? Moreover, he wouldn't have let my family know about our unspeakable relationship.

However, among the people I knew, no one would do such a thing except Michael. My brain stopped functioning. Right then, I wasn't sure if it was Michael or Yuval.

"Mom, do you know his name?"

Now I was the one on tenterhooks.

"Anna, what kind of question is this? Your boyfriend gave us the money, and are you telling me that you don't know his name?"

"Just answer my question, Mom!"

I was getting frustrated.

"It was his assistant who brought us the money. He said that he's working for Mr. Shaw."

She sensed my agitation and made it short and sweet.

Now I could confirm that it was Michael who sent them the money. He was the only Mr. Shaw I knew.

My hands quivered as I tried to figure out what I was feeling inside. Why would Michael do that? It was pretty clear that I drove him up the wall that day, and I assumed that he was going to end our relationship. What was his agenda? Why did he pay for Dad's medical treatment?

I couldn't read him or had the faintest idea of what he was up to.

"Anna? Are you okay? You there?"

Mom urged for a response after a prolonged silence.

"Yeah, I'm okay. Anyway, I still have some work to finish up. Talk to you later. Bye."

I quickly hung up, just in case she bombarded me with a train of questions about my relationship with Michael. If we were talking about Yuval, I'd willingly let her know a thing or two. However, the person she was praising was Michael, and I honestly didn't know much about him.

After the call, it took me quite a while to pull myself together. I glanced towards the CEO's office, trying to decipher Michael's intentions.

My mind was all over the place as I wondered what made Michael do that.

At the same time, Millie could see that I was in a jumble. She traced my glance towards the CEO's office, turned back, and looked at me.

"Hey, Anna. You've been looking at that office for the longest time. What's up? Have you fallen for Mr. Shaw?"

Millie probed, and her words gave me goosebumps.

"N-N-Nonsense! Why would I fall for him?" I responded with a curt turn of the head and denied firmly.

I wasn't sure for what reason my heart didn't seem to agree with my words. What's the matter with me? The way I thought about Michael had somewhat changed.

"Look at those darting eyes of yours. What's there to deny? He's handsome and rich. Plus, he's single. It's only normal that you fancy him. I bet almost all the ladies here want to get a piece of him."

Guess my actions weren't convincing enough for Millie to believe me.

"How about you? Do you like him too?"

"That's for sure. He took my heart away the first time I saw him, but I knew that a Plain Jane like me would never be his type."

Millie was frank about her feelings for Michael. Heck, I could even see her eyes gleaming with hearts and sparkles when she spoke about him. Is she for real?

On the outside, Michael was cold, charming, wealthy, and didn't lust after women. If Millie knew what he was really like on the inside, I doubt her feelings for him would be the same.

"I don't think he's a nice guy, and I kind of despise him."

I looked at his office again.

Lots of women wished to be associated with him in one way or another, but not me. I wanted to run away from his ever-growing possessiveness and hoped that we'd never crossed paths ever again.

"Really, Anna? Not only do you dislike him, but despise him?"

Millie gave me a quizzical look. Apparently, she found it unbelievable.

"He's not a saint, so why should everybody like him? I don't like him. I detest him!"

The more she thought that I was in love with Michael, the more I denied it. Besides, I was telling the truth, anyway.

Hearing that, Millie stopped talking and looked at the CEO's office. Together with my knitted brows and pursed lips, I did the same. Blood drained from my face when I saw the person standing in front of it.

## **Love from My Dominant Boss**

### **Chapter 87**

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Speak of the devil – the man himself was staring at me with his steely eyes.

I dropped my head as fast as I could and locked my neck. Why, oh why, is God playing tricks on me again?

Every time I badmouthed Michael, he would unfailingly appear somewhere close enough to hear it. Just when I thought things were finally getting better between us.

Millie, too, detected his overpowering hostility and went back to work. From what I could see, the ladies in the company seemed to fear Michael more than they liked him.

That was no surprise, though. His scrupulosity when it came to working would scare anyone off. A trivial mistake would cost someone her job.

"If I hear another word of gossip during work, you'd better send yourselves packing!"

He gave us his signature stare before uttering those threatening words.

Even with my head down, I could feel his piercing glare.

Only after I heard the closing of his door did I dare to lift my head again. His despotic aura followed him into his office.

“Oh my god! The way he looked at us was so scary! Anna, did you see those eyes?” Millie asked with her lips trembling.

“Yeah. Let’s not gossip during working hours again, or we’ll be fired.”

Come to think of it, Michael was being lenient with us. I highly doubted that we’d be given a second chance if the CEO was someone else. Thus, Millie and I were considered lucky. However, I wondered if his leniency was because of me.

Millie nodded her head and kept quiet from there on.

After work, I went to the supermarket as usual. Doing things on my own most of the time did make me feel lonely.

Back when I was living with Natalie, we’d always hang out at night. But now it was just me, and nothing seemed to interest me anymore.

When I got back to the house in Birchwood, Michael was already on the couch with his legs crossed in the living room. The top two buttons of his shirt were let loose and as always, his gaze was gnawing at my soul. I quietly turned away.

“Hurry up and make me dinner.”

He got up and strode towards me.

“What are you doing here? I thought I’ve made things clear that night?”

I ignored his request and wanted him to clarify.

Which part of my unwillingness and exhaustion didn’t he understand? What was he trying to do, standing in front of me tonight?

“Yes, you did, but did I say I’m going to let you go? Anna, you started it. Do you think it’ll be that easy to ditch me?” he murmured those shameful words into my ear.

How I wish I could give him two tight slaps to vent out my anger! How did men like that even exist? I’d told him everything at that point, so why couldn’t he just let me go?

Right then, he could see that anger was bubbling in my eyes, yet he brushed it aside.

"You know, the more you resist, the chances of me letting you go dwindle. Treat me well, and who knows, maybe one day when I'm in a good mood, I'll set you free?" He paired his threat with a sneer.

What a bastard! Never had I imagined that I'd be entangled in this scruffy affair. This man was like gum that you could never shake off no matter how hard you tried.

Since there was no point arguing with him, I walked to the kitchen in a huff.

After countless quarrels, it was obvious that he only did what pleased him. None of my reasonings or pleas would affect him. Any attempt to talk sense into him would only be futile.

Michael sat on the couch and watched TV while I cooked. He never once looked over to the kitchen, not even a glimpse.

I felt like I was a working wife who was busy with house chores after a day of work. It was weird that he felt like kin to me sometimes.

The extended hours of being in the same space made this feel almost real, as if we were really family.

I must've been bewitched to feel this way.

Shaking my head unconsciously with the intention of shaking all my thoughts out, I didn't notice until I accidentally cut my finger with the knife.

"Ouch..."

My face crumpled, the knife fell onto the floor, and blood came oozing out from between the flesh.

In came Michael. When he saw the cut, his usual stoic dark eyes turned soft. "Why are you so clumsy? Are you okay?"

He sounded worried. Despite that, I wasn't sure if the kindness I saw in his eyes was just a delusion. Would a guy like him sincerely care for a casual sex partner?

"I wasn't paying attention," I explained softly.

"You idiot. Can't you be more careful?" A reprimand followed.

I started looking around for a Band-Aid, but he already had it in his hand.

“Thank you.” When I tried to take it, he pulled his hand away, and before I had the chance to ridicule him, he offered to help. “Let me do it.” He then took my hand, wiped off the blood, and sealed the wound carefully with the Band-Aid.

He did it so gently that I didn’t even feel a pinch. I gaped at him as my mind became befuddled by his gentleness, though I must admit that his simplest act of kindness sent my heart fluttering.

Right then, I knew I had fallen for him, but I chose to live in denial, knowing that there’d be no future for us. I’d always tried to suppress my feelings, and that was why I wanted to break off from him.

If this relationship continued, I wasn’t sure if I could stop the probable endearment towards him.

## **Love from My Dominant Boss**

### **Chapter 88**

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“Be more careful for the next two days. Always keep the wound dry and clean.”

My jaw was still hanging in astonishment, reliving his tenderness in my head.

“Anna, have you turned mute?” he blurted with a frown from my non-responsiveness.

When I finally got back to my senses, his face was already only an inch away from mine. I nervously drew my focus back onto the chopping board.

After that, Michael went back to the living room, and about half an hour later, dinner was ready.

It was simple cooking and not the best, I must say. It did make me wonder why Michael always came here for dinner.

To be frank, I believed that his housekeeper would’ve made something way better than what I could offer.

We sat across from each other and started eating away. Should I ask him about what Mom told me?

“Did you give my parents the money?”

I let it out as this question had been bothering me the entire day.

I didn't mind getting on his nerves again anyway, as I'd done that way too many times.

"News travels fast, doesn't it?"

He wasn't surprised and continued chewing his food graciously as if he had nothing to do with the money.

"So it really is you. Why did you send my family a hundred thousand out of the blue?"

I put down my fork and looked at him, confused.

"I remember that you said that it was exhausting to support the whole family. Since now you're my woman, things will change. I can send your family a hundred thousand every month," he haughtily suggested.

Everything became crystal clear to me right then. He sent them money because he deduced that whatever I said that night was a hint for him to give me more?

How dare he think that of me! I was only ranting!

"Michael, you must've misunderstood me. When I said that I wanted someone to lean on, I wasn't asking that person to share my responsibilities. I was just hoping that someone could give me a shoulder to cry on whenever I'm tired and feeling helpless."

I tried to oppress the rage in me as I patiently explained to him.

"What's the use of a shoulder? With free money, you don't have to work your a\*s off to support your family. My goodness, Anna. I can't believe that a woman at your age could still be so naive!" he jeered.

That got me fuming. What he said was true. Women my age had been through enough, and most of them had bowed down to reality. Still, he shouldn't stereotype all women as such. Not everyone was money-minded.

It'd be unfair for the man if my purpose of being with him was merely to let him share my burden and responsibilities.

Yes, I was selfish, but not to the extent of getting someone to fund my family's expenses.

As a matter of fact, Dad's medical treatment wasn't the major spending. It was Steven's debt that had been sucking my bank account hollow. He was a good-for-nothing who always hung out with chavs. Not only that, but he was also a compulsive gambler.

Things wouldn't have been this tough if it was just Dad's monthly medical fee. However, Steven's debts kept rolling and rolling. No matter how many times I'd cleared his debt and his countless assurance of turning over a new leaf, he'd always go back to his old ways.

Thus, if I wanted someone to lean on and give me an endless supply of cash to fill this black hole, I would've been the most self-serving woman on earth.

"Michael, you can mock me, but that's what I really want. It's as simple as that. I was sharing with you my point of view, not asking you for money, so please, for the love of god, stop meddling with my life already."

I enunciated every single word.

"So within your capability, how much more can you do for your family? Anna, serve me for another six months. I've promised to give you a handsome amount of money after this ends. By then, you'll have one less problem in your life forever."

What he said really bemused me. What was so special about me that made him want to own me?

I wasn't ugly, but neither do I look fetching. For a guy like Michael to find someone pretty would be a piece of cake. He just had to whistle, and women would flock in droves to him. I mean, seriously, though, could someone answer my question? Why me?

"If that's the case, how am I different from a whore? Am I a whore to you?"

Undeniably, I'd got my hands on a great sum of money since I submitted to him. It was a sure-win trade, but what about my dignity? Was it below money?

I'd trampled my dignity once for two hundred thousand. It'd crushed me, and that was why I wouldn't allow it to happen again.

"You've positioned yourself as one, not me. Anna, what's so bad about being with me? Do you know how many people out there yearn for this? And here you are, saying no to me again and again. You even wanted to run away from me!"

A big cheese like him should've been used to women attending to all his whims and fancies. Perhaps I should be thankful for his patience after all this while.

"Yes, you can grant me money, but that's it. I want a boyfriend whom I could introduce to my family and friends. I want to get married and have children. Can you give me these? Since you can't, why can't you just let me go? Michael, we're poles apart in every single way."

That man thought all I wanted was money, but only I knew what my heart desired.

## Love from My Dominant Boss

### Chapter 89

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If I really wanted money, I would have asked for it from him the first time we slept together. But I didn't.

All I wanted was to have a proper discussion with him, not another argument. He was a domineering man, but he wasn't coldhearted.

Michael scanned me from head to toe curiously. He didn't have to say a single word for me to guess what he was thinking and what he was about to do.

"I'd advise you to give up on the idea of becoming my girlfriend. I can give you anything except that. I would never marry a nobody like you; know your place, Anna!"

If I'm just a nobody, then why are you, a huge CEO, so insistent on clinging to me?

You're surrounded by so many great, intelligent women. You could easily get any one of them to fall for you. So, why me?

"I never wanted to become your girlfriend. Relax. I know where I stand."

A man like him was most likely going to marry someone hailing from a powerful family background and beloved by all those around her.

There was no way that a woman like me would ever become his wife, and the mere idea sent chills up my spine.

"I won't force you. You have time to figure things out."

I let out an internal sigh of relief. I knew Michael would be reasonable.

But I didn't need time to figure things out. I'd made the decision a long time ago to end things with him. I was just afraid that if I let our relationship go on this way, I would not be able to keep my feelings in check any longer.

Michael was way too out of my league, surrounded by flocks of admiring women. On the other hand, I was just an ordinary girl. Even though I, too, liked handsome, charming guys like him, this particular man was destined to never be mine.

I'm not going to let myself fall any further. I'm not going to let myself get hurt again.

I decided to not reveal my decision until after a few days passed so that I wouldn't aggravate him in his brief moment of kindness.

After dinner, I was under the impression that Michael would stay the night. Yet to my surprise, he left the table and picked up his coat as soon as he had finished his dinner, walking out the door without so much as a "goodbye."

He left me all alone in an empty house, and I hated it.

Later, I took a shower and lay down on my bed, staring blankly at the ceiling. My mind was consumed by thoughts of Michael.

I'd thought that I would never be able to love another man after Justin, but I hadn't expected to fall in love with Michael so quickly after.

All along, I'd been lying to myself that I hated Michael, but I understood all too well what I truly felt for him. When I couldn't help but think of him every time I tried to go to sleep, I chalked it up to having interacted with him too much during the day. It took me a while to realize that that was not the case.

I knew that this little crush would go nowhere, and I was scared to let myself get heartbroken once more. So, I curled in on myself like a porcupine and protected myself in the only way I knew how to – by keeping him at arm's length.

The sound of my phone ringing snapped me awake from my daze. I glanced at the screen, cheering up when I saw that it was Natalie.

I hadn't dared call Natalie for the past few days for fear that she might think that I was trying to get in between her and John again. There were

actually several times where my finger nearly pressed the “dial” button, but I could never muster up the courage to do so.

I hurriedly answered the call. “Nat! You finally called!”

I must have sounded excited even through the phone. I mean, what could I say; Natalie calling was the best thing that had happened to me recently.

To my surprise, I heard Natalie sobbing on the other end. “Anna...”

“Why are you crying, Natalie? What’s wrong?”

My heart lurched to the bottom of my stomach. Natalie was a bright, happy-go-lucky girl who rarely cried.

Was it that asshole, John? Did he hurt her?

Instantly, Natalie’s answer confirmed my suspicions. “He lied to me, Anna. He’s having an affair with another woman,” she wailed.

I’d expected the answer, but my breath hitched in my throat nonetheless when hearing Natalie say it out loud.

Natalie was bawling her eyes out right then. However, I knew that whatever I said right now would fall on deaf ears. At that point, my best friend was devastated, and my heart went out to her as I knew exactly how she felt.

“Are you at home, Nat?”

I knew that she used to live together with John, but I didn’t know whether or not she still did.

Natalie hiccupped. “Mm-mm...”

With that, I hung up the phone and immediately left the house.

The ride to Natalie’s house was about ten minutes. I rushed up to the door and repeatedly rang the doorbell, worried sick that she might do something she would regret if she was left alone for even a minute longer.

Natalie had given me a spare key when I first left her house. Now, I regretted giving the key back to her when I moved away.

After a long, agonizing wait, Natalie finally opened the door. Letting out a relieved sigh, I dragged her into the living room and sat us both down on

the couch. Her eyes were horribly red and swollen, and her clothes were all rumped.

“Nat... What happened to you?”

I tucked a stray lock of messy hair behind her ear, giving her a pained look. I'd been friends with her for years, and I'd never seen her in such a state before.

John, you d\*ck!

“I'm sorry, Anna. I should have listened to you in the beginning. John is nothing but a scumbag. He even brought that girl along with him when he met up with me for the breakup today,” Natalie spat out through a stuffy nose, throwing herself into my arms.

## Love from My Dominant Boss

### Chapter 90

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I knew all too well how much Natalie liked John. Yet, he had the audacity to not only cheat on her but also bring the girl he'd cheated on her with when asking to split with Natalie? What a f\*cking a\*shole!

“What the hell? How could he do such a thing?”

My hands clenched into fists, rage flaring up within me.

“I'm really sorry, Anna, I truly am. I know that you were only looking out for me back then. I'm sorry for not believing you...”

Natalie started crying even harder, constantly wiping her tears away with a tissue.

“It's okay, Nat. You don't have to apologize. You were head over heels for John; that wasn't your fault.”

I probably would have done the same thing as Natalie if I were in her shoes.

“You really don't blame me? I even said that I was going to cut off all contact with you because of John...” She glanced up at me uneasily.

“Come on, we've been friends for so long; you know me! If I really was still angry at you, I wouldn't have come here at all.”

It was true that I had been angry back then, and that was why I'd left her house. But I had grown to accept reality as time passed. Besides, Natalie was my best friend, and there was no way I could be angry at her forever.

"Thank you so much, Anna. Thank you for coming over to comfort me," she choked out, her arms tightening around me.

"Don't mention it. I know you must be feeling horrible right now. Cry all you want; you'll feel better afterward," I reassured her, patting her back in a comforting motion.

I knew all too well the heart-wrenching type of pain that was betrayal, causing one to lose all hope and motivation to continue living, and I knew that Natalie had to be feeling the exact same way.

"I really loved him, Anna," Natalie whimpered, her tears wetting my shirt. "Why did he have to do this to me? I even gave him my virginity... Why did he have to hurt me like this?"

Hearing that, I had no idea how to answer her.

Natalie was right; she had given up everything for this relationship. Unfortunately, people like her who did just that were usually always the ones to get hurt the easiest.

"Just forget about him, Nat. He's not worth your love. Just think of it as getting accidentally bitten by a dog."

Comparing John to a dog is an insult to all dogs around the world. At least dogs are loyal to their owners.

"But I really like him, and I really want to stay with him. What should I do?" Natalie insisted.

Of course she would feel indignant over getting dumped by John. After all, this was her first relationship, and she had poured all of her time, love, and effort into it. Anyone else would feel indignant if they were in her position.

"Calm down, Nat! You could do so much better than that guy!"

Natalie cried even harder after hearing me say that.

Oh, what I would give to hunt John down right now.

But all I could do was hug her and stay by her side for the time being. Regardless of however much I tried to give her advice or comfort her, she had to come to face the truth by herself.

Natalie stayed in my arms and sobbed throughout the rest of the night. She only finally drifted off into sleep when it was dawn, completely drained of energy.

Then, I carefully set her down on the couch, grabbing a blanket from her bedroom and tucking her in.

I heaved a heavy sigh as I looked at her. There was no telling when Natalie would be able to heal from this hardship. If only I'd been more determined to show her what John was really like...

After that, I took out my phone and glanced at the time. It was nearly time for me to go to work, but I felt anxious about leaving Natalie alone like this. So, I decided to call my supervisor and ask for a day off.

I sat by Natalie's side for a while, cleaning up her dried tears and snot before leaving to buy us breakfast.

Dragging my feet as I walked, I stared down at the pavement as I stewed in my own frustration and thought up various ways to get revenge on John.

Just then, my phone rang. My eyebrows furrowed together when I saw that Michael was calling, completely curious as to why he would call me at this time.

"Hello, Mr. Shaw," I politely greeted.

There was silence on the other end of the line for a second before I heard Michael demanded, "Why didn't you come to work today? Are you avoiding me?" He sounded upset and accusatory.

"No, Mr. Shaw. Even if I didn't want to see you, I wouldn't give up my salary to do so. I had something urgent to tend to, and I've already asked to take a day off from my supervisor. I don't need to inform you too, do I, Mr. Shaw?" I sighed in exasperation.

At the state I was in, I wished I could work overtime every day just so I could earn a little extra money. Why would I not go to work because I wanted to avoid him? His imagination and narcissism were truly something else.

It's not like my world revolved around you, y'know!

“What is your reason for not coming to the office?” he pressed on.

“Why do I need to tell you my reason? I was already granted leave.”

I was already in a bad mood before this, but Michael’s incessant questioning only worsened it. Who does he think he is?

“I’m your boss, Anna. Do you think you can get away with taking a day off without giving me a valid reason why?”