

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 91

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I huffed. "I took a day off because my best friend broke up with her boyfriend, and I need time to make sure she's doing alright, okay?"

I couldn't help but wonder whether Michael was trying to start an argument on purpose.

Michael grew quiet. After a few seconds, I heard him hang up on me.

"What the hell?" I stared at my phone with a deadpan expression. He's been acting weirdly irritating these past few days.

Deciding not to pay it much mind, I bought takeaway food for breakfast and went back to Natalie's place. When I first got dumped, she had been there for me all throughout my healing process; now, it was my turn to do the same for her.

Natalie was already awake when I got back, her legs drawn up to her chest as she hugged them and stared off into space.

I set the food down on the dining table and approached her.

"Why didn't you sleep for a while longer?"

"I can't. Every time I close my eyes, the memory of him with that girl resurfaces in my mind." She gave me a sidelong glance, her eyes starting to grow watery again.

Upon that, I sighed and sat down beside her to wrap my arms around her, feeling slightly at a loss for what to do. "This is all going to pass. Look at me; I'm doing pretty good right now! You'll be able to forget him eventually; I promise."

Heartbreak was never a permanent emotion, and scars would fade with time. I still felt uncomfortable whenever I thought about Justin again, but the memory of him didn't hurt as much as it first did when we broke up.

"Have you really moved on, Anna? You really don't feel sad anymore?" Natalie asked curiously.

"Yup! Trust me; you'll be able to move on too. Getting sad over a*sholes like John isn't worth it. We deserve much better than that."

"But, I don't know..." She clutched onto my arm. "I feel like I've lost everything without him with me. What do you think I did wrong, Anna? What went wrong?"

"He's just a piece of trash, Natalie, and there's nothing you can do to change that! None of this was your fault. He would never appreciate you and cherish you for who you truly are, no matter what you did. You have to wake up and realize the kind of person he is!"

Why can't she see that it's not worth getting all worked up over someone who doesn't deserve her love and attention? Does she still hope to get him back?

Natalie stared at me with wide eyes. After a long while, a veil seemed to lift from her eyes, and her shoulder slumped. I knew that my words had gotten through to her rationality, but they might need some time to get through to her heart.

It was just that the thought of her being this sad over John, who likely didn't even regret his actions, infuriated me.

Tears ran down Natalie's face, but I offered no more words of comfort, instead opting to pull her to sit down at the dining table.

"Eat something. You shouldn't ruin your body for a man," I told her, handing her the sandwich that I'd bought.

She hung her head and kept her gaze fixed on the table as she slowly nibbled on the sandwich.

It eventually grew dark outside. Nonetheless, Natalie sat motionless on the couch, not saying a word. Worried that she might do something reckless if I left, I decided to stay and watch over her.

As if reading my mind, she turned to look at me, saying quietly, "You don't have to stay, Anna. I'll be fine."

"It's okay; I don't have to work tomorrow either. I might as well stay the night to look after you."

How could I just abandon her when she's in this state?

"I know what you're concerned about, Anna. Don't worry about me. I won't hurt myself over someone who doesn't deserve it. Please go home; I want to be left alone for now."

It was true that Natalie had calmed down considerably throughout the day. She still looked like a wreck, but at least she wasn't crying anymore.

"Alright then. Call me if you need anything. I'll be here at the drop of a hat."

Everyone needed time to themselves after a bad break-up. Knowing this, I didn't press the topic any further and left her place.

As I walked back home alone, my phone rang out from my pocket. It was Yuval calling to ask if we could meet up tomorrow, but I rejected his request.

Tomorrow was the weekend, and I had plans to go back to my hometown. I wasn't going to let my parents keep the hundred thousand that they got from Michael.

Ugh... These last few months have been torture.

Michael was already home when I arrived at Birchwood. I wasn't surprised at the sight of him; if anything, I'd gotten used to his presence after having to be with him daily.

I silently changed into my in-house slippers and made a beeline for the bedroom.

"You're back," Michael suddenly greeted. His tone sounded flat and devoid of any emotion.

"Mm-hmm."

I made a simple sound of acknowledgment and headed in the direction of the bedroom once more.

"Your best friend finally got dumped?"

I'd expected him to get bored and leave if I just ignored him, but he seemed to have no intention of leaving me alone today. His comments pissed me off greatly. What does he mean by that?

I turned around to squint at him in disdain. "You sound like you're trying to rub salt into the wound."

"You've always wanted for her to discover his true personality, and she did. Shouldn't you be happy?" he said, playing with the ring on his finger as he raised an eyebrow.

Happy? Has he gone mad? Why would I have been looking forward to Natalie getting dumped?

If anything, I would rather John put on a façade in front of her for the rest of her life than let him break her heart.

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“I’m not happy. I just think that he isn’t worth getting sad over.”

With that, I turned back around and left the room.

Too many mishaps had happened recently, and I wasn’t in the mood to argue with Michael any further.

I took a quick shower and planned on sleeping early tonight. After all, I had to wake up early the next day and take a trip back to my hometown to take back the hundred thousand to return to Michael.

Our first time had merely been a transactional occurrence, but now things had changed.

I came out of the bathroom and was surprised to see that Michael had followed me to my bedroom, sitting on my bed.

“Why are you here?” I asked in irritation. “I want to sleep.”

“Then let’s sleep together. I’m tired after a long day as well.”

He wasn’t mad. Instead, a hint of smile appeared on his handsome face as he lay down and made himself comfortable on the bed.

“If there’s nothing urgent, I’d like you to please leave. I’ve been in a really bad mood all day.” I stood stiffly, repressing the growing anger within me.

Is he really going to be this childish and stubborn?

“This is my house, remember? Are you trying to chase me out of a room in my own house?” Michael crossed his arms over his chest, staring down his nose at me smugly.

At that, I admit that I had nearly forgotten that I was currently on his territory. I'd also forgotten that I was supposed to tell him my decision after coming back here and that I couldn't stay here any longer.

Though I did feel grateful that he gave me a roof over my head when I had no one else to turn to, I couldn't stay here forever.

"If you're not leaving, then I'll leave," I declared, digging out my clothes from the closet to change into them later on.

Michael strode over to me, grabbing ahold of my arm and turning me around, cornering me against the closet. Before my mind could process what was going on, he leaned down and kissed me.

My eyes widened in shock, and my mind went blank.

I hadn't been intimate with him in several days. When he told me that he wasn't going to force me, I'd thought that he would keep his distance from me for the time being.

It appeared that everything he said had all been a lie.

He pressed his mouth to mine desperately, his hands traveling up and down my body. I wanted to push him away, but my strength was no match for his.

In the blink of an eye, he'd picked me up and set me down on the bed, hovering over me with both of his hands on either side of my head. I tried to place my hands against his chest to try and stop him from going any further, but when I looked up, I could see that his eyes were already fogged over with lust.

He furrowed his eyebrows, not pleased at having been interrupted.

"What do you think you're doing?" He growled out, a dark expression on his face.

"You said yourself that you weren't going to force me and that you'd wait for me to make my decision."

I knew that I was fighting an uphill battle, but it didn't hurt to still try.

As soon as I said that, Michael's eyes narrowed slightly. "Are you using my own words against me?"

"I'm just speaking the truth. Or were you lying when you told me that a few days ago?"

Michael still looked annoyed, but I could see him visibly hesitate.

So he does remember what he said to me. Maybe I still have a chance at persuading him.

Unfortunately, that thought quickly dissipated when I heard what he had to say next.

“You must have misunderstood. I only meant that I wasn’t going to force you to make a decision too quickly. I never said that I wasn’t going to force you to have sex,” he smirked.

I couldn’t believe my ears. This man is really going to insist on having his way or the high way!

“You have no shame, Michael,” I muttered through gritted teeth.

My impression of him had changed once more.

“I’m going to be even more shameless from now on. Would you like to see?”

He’d always had the most patience when in bed. No matter how much I scolded or berated him, he would always brush my insults aside with a proud smile.

This man might have appeared mature and solemn on the surface, but he became a completely different person when it came to his physical needs. In fact, he was almost like an insatiable child.

I glared at him, unable to find anything to reply with. There was no doubt that he was speaking the truth and absolutely planned on following through with his promise.

Upon witnessing my brief moment of vulnerability, Michael raised an eyebrow and pushed my hands away, reaching down to undo the front of my chiffon sleeping gown.

Pushing the fabric aside to reveal my skin, he scanned my body from head to toe, and I awkwardly turned my head to one side to avoid his gaze.

Within seconds, he had undone the rest of my sleeping gown, and I laid bare before him.

His long fingers traced down my neck with a sense of familiarity, his gaze burning with need and want.

When the realization dawned upon me that I was not going to be able to sleep early tonight, I closed my eyes. There was no use trying to refuse him anyway, so I might as well close my eyes and enjoy it while it lasts.

A satisfied smile tugged at Michael's lips, and he proceeded to leave his mark all over my body.

From a man's point of view, a woman's body was the sexiest thing in the world. Perhaps it was lesser common knowledge that men could use their bodies to easily seduce a woman, just like Michael.

I doubted there was a single woman on earth that wouldn't be attracted to his god-like physique. Every time I laid my eyes on his body, I had to resist letting out a squeal. It was embarrassing, but it was the truth.

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I couldn't deny that Michael was a great partner in bed, and getting to sleep with him was always a pleasurable experience.

Every touch of his hands and mouth left goosebumps in its wake, igniting a flame within me.

In the back of my mind, I thought about ending this relationship and possibly getting married to someone else. I wondered if I and my future husband would be as compatible in bed as Michael and I were.

After all, it was hard to get used to someone new after you had already grown so familiar with a person's body.

Sensing my momentary distraction, Michael paused and knitted his eyebrows together.

"Why do you look distracted when I'm trying to please you? Am I not doing well enough for you?"

Men didn't like it when their partners had the peace of mind to think about anything else except them during sex, and Michael was no exception.

I snapped back to reality, my heart skipping a beat in a panic when my gaze met his icy cold one. How did he even notice that I was distracted?

"No. It feels good," I hurriedly replied, turning to look at anything but him.

"It doesn't seem that way to me. Looks like I'll need to work harder."

His movements instantly increased in their intensity, and I had no other option but to take what he was giving me.

I was drained of all energy after several rounds in a row, and I felt him finally release inside me.

He didn't collapse and go to sleep straight away but wrapped me up in his arms and held me as his breath slowly evened out.

It felt nice to be in his embrace like that, and I briefly dreamed of a life where I could fall asleep like this every night.

The idea startled me as soon as it crossed my mind. Since when have I grown to rely on Michael so much? How could he ever be a permanent presence in my future?

I shook my head as if physically chasing all the bad thoughts away. I understood all too well that Michael and I would never be a thing, and I couldn't allow myself to fantasize about it anymore.

"What's wrong? Do you feel uncomfortable?" Michael stared at me curiously.

"N- No..." I quickly denied.

I couldn't let him figure out what I was thinking.

He had told me multiple times before that a relationship between us was impossible.

Thus, if he found out about my feelings for him, who knew what he might think about me.

Michael didn't respond, closing his eyes as if going to sleep.

"Um... I'm going back to my hometown tomorrow." I spoke up, glancing at him. "I'll be back by nighttime on the last day of the weekend."

He usually never said a word before disappearing for several days at a time, so I wasn't sure why I felt the need to explain the reason for my own absence tomorrow.

His eyes fluttered open, and he furrowed his eyebrows as he looked at me. "You're staying there overnight?"

"Yeah. I haven't been back home in a while, even though I call my family a lot, and I don't know how my Dad is doing either."

Of course, the main reason for going back home was to retrieve the hundred thousand, but I wasn't going to tell Michael that.

Knowing him and his temper, he would get angry at me if he discovered the truth.

Besides, we were sharing a rare moment of peace and quiet, and I didn't want to disrupt it.

"I'll have someone send you," he said.

My heart skipped a beat. Did he come up with that idea because he's worried about me?

For some reason, that revelation made me feel giddy with happiness, although there was a small voice in the back of my mind that kept reminding me about our current relationship status.

Even if he felt concerned, I wasn't going to accept his act of kindness.

"It's fine. I'll just hail a taxi from the bus station. The drive there is only four to five hours." I told him, even though my heartbeat was still pounding in my ears.

If he weren't an unattainable CEO and so out of my league, I would have fallen head over heels for him a long time ago.

"Are you sure?"

His eyes looked like they were searching for something as if trying to figure out why I said the things I said and why I did the things I did.

"Yes. I always take a taxi by myself whenever I go home; I'm used to it."

"Suit yourself."

Michael gave up after my second rejection, turning his back to me and laying on his side.

Disappointment and guilt welled up inside me when I was ended up staring at his back, but I kept quiet.

I turned over so that our backs were facing each other.

At some point, Michael had pulled me back into his arms in the middle of the night, his face buried into the crook of my neck. Every warm exhale and inhale tickled my sensitive skin.

Despite so, I made no effort to escape his grasp, merely closing my eyes and letting sleep overtake me once more.

When I woke up the next morning, Michael was still there lying next to me, sound asleep. This was the first time that I'd ever seen him upon waking up.

I carefully crawled out of his embrace, lifting his arm up from around my waist and tiptoeing out of bed for fear of waking him up.

I quickly changed into my clothes and was packing my luggage when I heard Michael's sleep-addled, husky voice called out, "You're leaving so early in the morning?"

I whipped around to look at him. He was sitting up in bed, staring at me with those dark eyes of his, completely naked except for the blanket covering the lower half of his body.

My cheeks flushed at the sight, and I quickly turned back around. "Yeah," I coughed out, returning to my task of packing my stuff. "The drive is a long time, so I want to get there as early as possible."

Although I only planned on staying for one night, I still needed to bring at least a change of clothes and my toiletries with me.

Michael eventually got up and put on his clothes as well. I was surprised; it was seven in the morning on a weekend, and I thought that he would take the chance to sleep in while he could.

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"Why are you up so early? Shouldn't you try to get a little more sleep?" I asked in confusion when I saw Michael fully dressed and about to go wash up in the bathroom.

I know he's a workaholic and all, but it's the weekends right now, and anyone in their right mind would want to sleep in! This man really is something else...

"I'm dropping you off at the station. After that, I'll head back to the mansion and carry on sleeping."

His reply had me both surprised and happy at the same time. I didn't think a man like him was capable of being so caring and thoughtful.

"That won't be necessary. I can just hail a cab there."

As much as I wanted for him to send me there, I decided to refuse his offer out of courtesy anyway. I didn't want him thinking that I wanted to be seen with him in public so I could call myself his girlfriend.

"Give me ten minutes." Michael shot me a glare before heading into the bathroom.

After taking some time to regain my composure, I dragged my suitcase into the living room and waited for Michael.

As expected, he came out of the bedroom in less than ten minutes. Instead of his usual formal attire, Michael was dressed in a white jersey and a pair of black sweatpants. That was the first time I had seen him in such casual clothes, and he looked so vibrant and handsome that I blushed without even realizing.

Michael drove off without another word after dropping me off at the station, which made me feel a little disappointed.

It took me a moment to recompose myself before heading over to the ticketing lobby. After purchasing my bus ticket, I waited patiently for the bus to arrive.

After spending about half the day on the bus, I finally reached my hometown. As my house was located in the village, I had to take quite a long walk from the bus station to get there.

Since I had given my mom a call before heading home, she was already waiting for me as soon as I entered the village.

"You must be tired after such a long trip, huh? Here, I'll help you with the bags!"

My mom took my stuff over the moment she saw me, including the supplements that I had bought for my dad on my way here.

"How is Dad, Mom? Is he getting any better?"

I began chatting with my mom while walking next to her.

“He’s much better after the surgery, so don’t you worry! All you have to do is focus on your work, okay? I’ll take good care of him!”

The two of us soon arrived at the house after a brief chat.

I took some time to catch up with my dad at home while my mom prepared dinner. My younger brother, Steven, came home in the evening.

The entire living room was filled with the stench of alcohol the moment Steven entered the house, and that smell got even worse as he approached me and asked, “What are you doing here, Anna? How much money did you bring with you?”

I frowned at the sight of his reddened face and scolded him, “Steven, just look at you! You’re not a child anymore, for heaven’s sake! Why can’t you pull your sh*t together and get a proper job?”

My brother dropped out of school at a young age and had spent most of his life hanging out with delinquents. As a result, he often got into fights and frequented brothels as well as gambling dens.

Even so, the village had a very patriarchal mindset, so my parents continued to spoil him while I was allowed to work in the city all by myself.

They never bothered to ask me if I was doing all right or if I had enough money on me. In fact, they would only call me if they needed money for Steven who only knew how to get himself into trouble.

I couldn’t really complain much as patriarchy was the norm in the village, and he was my brother. I didn’t mind helping him out financially if he was actually working a proper job, but he was wasting his life away fighting, gambling, and drinking.

To make matters worse, the money that I had earned through all of my hard work was mostly spent on cleaning up the mess he made.

I’m no saint, and I have feelings too! Right now, I only have disappointment for Steven.

“You come home, and the first thing you do is lecture me? Jeez, what did I do to offend you, Anna?”

Steven was very hot-tempered, so he didn’t exactly appreciate what I had just said.

“Would you take a look at yourself! Do you even care about Dad’s health at all? Why can’t you just get yourself a proper job and help relieve some of the burden at home?”

The fact that he had it in him to get so drunk despite Dad’s condition had disappointed me to the core.

“Dad had his surgery done, hadn’t he? Don’t worry. He’ll be fine!”

Steven let out a loud burp as he said that, and the pungent smell of alcohol in his breath agitated me even further. Mom and Dad loved Steven so much since he was a kid, and yet he turned out to become such a failure!

I shot him a fierce glare and was about to say something when my mom came out of the kitchen. She immediately took his side the moment she saw me scolding him and said, “What are you doing, Anna? Why are you fighting with your brother right after coming home? What did he ever do to you, huh?”

Usually, my mom loved me a lot, but everything would automatically become my fault whenever Steven was involved.

It didn’t even matter what he did, because my parents would always blame me for everything anyway.

“Mom, Anna has been scolding me for no reason! I didn’t do anything!” Steven said with a sad look on his face as he walked up to our mom.

Given how patriarchal my parents were, nothing mattered more than my brother, and they would defend him regardless of what happened.

“Anna, it’s been ages since you and Steven last saw each other. You shouldn’t be lashing out at him like this!”

She defended Steven as usual.

On a typical day, I would have backed down upon hearing that. However, I refused to do so that day as I had been through too much and couldn’t stand Steven’s shenanigans any longer.

Given the amount of love that Mom and Dad had showered him with, shouldn’t he be more obligated to help relieve the family’s burdens?

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“Mom, he’s like this now because you and Dad have been spoiling him since childhood! Just look at him! He’ll doom us all if he keeps this jobless deadbeat bullsh*t up!” I shouted angrily while pointing at Steven who was hiding behind her.

I didn’t care if my words would affect my relationship with Steven as I knew for a fact that we would all be done for if we carried on like this.

“How could you say that about your brother?” Mom snapped back at me furiously before Steven could even say anything in response.

She had always defended Steven with a complete disregard for my feelings, and that hadn’t changed one bit even with the state that Steven was in.

“I’m saying this for his own good, Mom! He dropped out of school and is now in his twenties without a proper job! Do you really plan on letting him remain a parasite in our family?”

I wasn’t comfortable with how Mom was defending Steven like that, but I had gotten used to it over time. All I wanted was for Steven to do his part and help support the family with me.

“That’s rude, Anna! How could you call me, your brother, a parasite? Are you implying that Mom and Dad gave birth to a parasite?” Steven retorted as if his actions were completely justified.

“Rude? I wouldn’t be saying that if you did your part in supporting this family!”

Steven was an unrepentant person by nature, so nothing I said or did would ever make him change his ways.

“Anna! Don’t you say that about your brother!”

Mom stepped in front of Steven and glared at me angrily when she saw that I was still going on about it.

“You need to stop defending him, Mom! He’s a grown adult now, and he still doesn’t have a proper job! All he does is gamble, drink, and freeload

off us every day! We'll be done for sooner or later if he doesn't change his ways!"

Normally, I would've stopped scolding him by then, but I refused to that day.

"Anna, I'm going to get angry if you don't stop treating your brother like this! I know you've had it rough at work and all, but you've already scolded him, haven't you? Why don't you give it a rest now?"

I had wanted to continue scolding Steven, but I knew I wouldn't hear the end of it from my mom if I did.

Having no other choice, I simply shot him a fierce glare and sat down at the dinner table.

Steven turned out like this because Mom and Dad had spoiled him way too much. They never let him do any work at home and basically treated him like a king of some sort.

"My goodness, I could hear you all arguing from outside the house. What's going on?" Dad asked as he came in and shot me a displeased glare.

"It's nothing. Just a little squabble between siblings, that's all!" Mom spoke up before I could say anything.

"Yeah, it's fine, Dad. It's been a long time since I last saw Anna, so I was having a little chat with her," Steven chimed in as well.

Although extremely furious, I kept my feelings to myself as Dad had a weak heart, and I didn't want to get into a fight with Steven in front of him.

Meanwhile, Mom had prepared quite a lot of dishes for dinner as I hadn't returned in a long time.

Mom made all of these dishes just for me... Although my parents were always defending Steven and all, they still care about me! I felt a heartwarming sensation at the thought of that.

However, that feeling was gone as soon as it came when my mom said, "Here you go, Stevie! You've gotten so skinny lately, so you need to eat more meat! I knew you were coming back today, so I made these dishes just for you!"

So this meal was meant for Steven, not me... Looks like I've overestimated my place in Mom's heart...

With that in mind, I kept my head low as I finished my meal in silence while Mom continued topping up Steven's plate throughout dinner.

After doing the dishes, I decided to tell my parents about my reason for coming home. Then, I asked my mom for the hundred thousand, so I could pay Michael back.

I waited till Steven had gone to bed at about nine before knocking on my parents' door. They had a habit of sleeping late, so they should still be awake by then.

"Come on in," Mom called out from inside the room.

I opened the door and saw my dad reading a book in bed while my mom was busy knitting something.

"Oh, Anna, what's the matter?" Mom asked with a confused frown when she saw that it was me.

I simply looked at her in silence as I contemplated on how I should start my sentence.

"You said you had something to tell us, right? Well, what is it?"

Mom stopped her knitting and stared straight at me when she saw me hesitating.

"Mom... I uh... I need you to hand over the hundred thousand so I can pay Michael back."

I told Mom the reason I had returned. Although my family was short on cash, I couldn't bring myself to accept Michael's money as I wasn't related to him in any way.

Of course, that was just wishful thinking on my part because Mom lashed out at me after hearing what I said.

"You want me to return the money? No way! He gave the money to us, so it's ours now, and I'm not about to give it back!" she shouted angrily while jumping to her feet.

I frowned in frustration at how agitated she was.

I knew Mom wouldn't hand it over that easily, but Michael and I are not a couple, so I can't be accepting his money like this!

“Mom, this money doesn’t belong to us! We should return it to its rightful owner!” I exclaimed anxiously.

“Like I said, he gave it to us, so it’s ours now! He has no right to take it back after giving it to us! Anna, you know how difficult things have been for us, don’t you? This money didn’t come easy, so how could you ask us to just give it up? Do you not care about us at all?”