

Love from My Dominant Boss

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I knew that the woman was determined to force me into cutting ties with Michael and would not easily give up. Her threatening tone had caused another wave of fury to engulf me.

When I was back at home, there was still no sign of Michael. I was disappointed, as I was thinking of telling him about what happened earlier.

Unable to restrain the growing exasperation in my heart, I needed to vent my anger at once. Why are there endless hiccups in my life?

I took out Michael's red wine from the wine cabinet and slumped onto the couch. People claim that they tend to forget about their frustrations when they get drunk. Let me give it a try! I poured the red wine into a glass and started to drink.

I did not know the way to judge the quality of red wine and just finished glass by glass spontaneously. Due to my low alcohol tolerance, I started to feel giddy after gulping down a few glasses of red wine. Apart from that, my vision became blurry gradually.

Not long after that, I had finished almost half a bottle of Michael's red wine. I sensed that I had started to get drunk, yet those disgruntling moments I intended to put out of my mind appeared to be even more vivid in my mind. What's the matter? Why do I tend to remember everything better even after I'm drunk?

Drink my sorrows away? I really doubted if it was effective. I was almost drunk, yet I could not put the despair out of my mind. My heart flinched whenever I recalled how my beloved family members would readily betray me just to obtain one million.

By the time Michael reached home, I was completely drunk. Upon hearing the sound of the door opened, I turned to look in the direction of the door. The moment his figure came into view, I was overcome by a wave of indignance.

"You're back?" I forced a smile and burped. After struggling frantically to get up, I wobbled toward him.

Michael froze in his steps and knitted his brows. "Have you been drinking?" He was displeased when he caught a glimpse of the bottle of red wine which was almost empty.

As I was advancing toward him, my legs gave out abruptly, and I fell onto the floor. However, a drunken me could not feel the slightest bit of pain as I struggled to get up.

“Anna Garcia, how much did you drink? Look at how disheveled you are now!” As he raised his voice, his frown deepened into a scowl. There were flickers of fury in his eyes.

The next moment, he strode toward me and lifted me up effortlessly to the couch. Sensing the intimidating gazes of his blazing eyes, my heart started to throb again.

“Why are you shouting at me? I only drank a little,” I refuted and looked at him indignantly. Right that instant, tears started to well up in my eyes. I yearned to seek solace and comfort from him even more.

“Are you sure it’s just a little bit? Anna, look at the wine bottle. You’ve almost finished the whole bottle! What’s the matter with you? Have you gone nuts?” Michael lambasted as he pointed at it, causing me to be down in the dumps.

“I just feel like drinking some wine. What’s wrong with that? Can’t I have the right to even do this? Why can’t I decide for my own life? Why do I need to give in to all of you all the time? Why?” Unable to restrain the growing indignance within me, I imagined that he was my parents and unleashed my wrath at him.

Those were the words stifled within me for a long time. Nonetheless, I was unable to blurt out the words whenever I was face-to-face with my parents. After all, they were the ones who nurtured me throughout these years, so I did not have the heart to be on bad terms with them.

In an instant, Michael stiffened at the sight of my agitation. When he came to his senses, there was anger simmering in his eyes as he snorted, “Anna Garcia, have you lost your mind?”

“I have put a lot of effort all this while. But, why can’t all of you try to be concerned about me a bit more? I really yearn for your love and care. Since young, I have been working hard to fulfill your requests. I always think that it’s because I’m not conscientious and diligent enough. Thus, after completing my studies, I work really hard to earn money. Even so, you never treat me any different, no matter how hard I try. Why? Tell me why!” I gazed at Michael with my teary eyes as I mumbled sorrowfully over and over.

For so many years, I had always wondered why my parents were treating me indifferently all the time. I had tried by all means, yet they never

changed their demeanor toward me. It did not make sense if it was just because of their patriarchal mindset.

Miraculously, Michael's expression softened, and the flares in his eyes vanished speedily. He was an intelligent man and was surely able to guess what I had encountered a while ago. Thus, he strode toward me with inexplicable mixed emotions in his eyes. I wrapped my arms tightly around his waist at once and pressed my face hard against his chest.

"What happened? What did your parents do this time?" There was unmissable concern in his low, charismatic voice. Sensing my distress and helplessness, he did not shove me away from him.

"Emma bribed my parents to talk me into leaving you. She promised to give them one million for that. When I went back to my parents' house today, they even forced me to leave this city." I sniffled and sobbed as I told him what had happened.

Despite that, I did not intend to tell on Emma and request Michael to stand up for me. I just wanted to pour out my heart to him. Compared to my parents, he was someone a lot closer to me at the moment.

As snippets of my family members forcing me to leave flashed across my mind, my tears started flowing like a river. I wiped my tears and snot instinctively with Michael's shirt. At that very moment, I had forgotten that the man was germophobic!

Another wave of anger flared in his eyes again. At the peak of his fury, he almost lashed out at me once more. Yet, sensing my indignance, he somehow suppressed his anger and held himself back.

After quite a while, he asked indifferently, "So Emma did that?" Even though he had seemingly softened, he was still giving off an intimidating vibe.

"Yeah, she had threatened me numerous times, yet I never gave in to her. I've never expected her to use my parents against me."

My lips curved into a self-deprecating smile as I squinted tipsily at Michael. Once again, my money-minded parents could not resist the charm of money and would rather let me be the sacrificial lamb.

As I embraced Michael tightly, his unique scent seemed to calm me down gradually. Whenever I was alongside him, I could at least sense a little warmth. At least there's still someone who cares about me.

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I shuddered as a surge of fear crept into my heart. Wrapping my arms tightly around Michael, I then murmured helplessly, “You’re the only person by my side now. The only one...” I feared that he would treat me just like how my parents did. I was in great fear—fearful of being given up by everyone else, just like my parents.

I could feel Michael’s body tremble upon hearing my words. Instantaneously, he embraced me tightly, sending ripples of warmth that seemed to ease the uneasiness in my heart.

“I will get this matter resolved.” Even if I was not sure what he was referring to, the firmness in his tone managed to calm me down in an instant. Apart from that, my confidence was boosted in a way.

With him beside me, I did not feel like I was abandoned and all alone.

Burying my face in Michael’s chest, I blurted out everything deep down in my heart all this while. “Michael, do you know that I have been leading a hectic life throughout these years? I’m both physically and emotionally exhausted. Apart from working hard every day, there seem to be endless issues at home for me to attend to. Life has been really stressful for me. I’m just yearning for a simple life that is less stressful. Is that considered wishful thinking that I shouldn’t have?”

I only had a simple wish. Apart from the love and care from my parents, I wished to lead a peaceful and happy life with my family. Nevertheless, it was like a dream which was impossible to be fulfilled.

“Anna, pull yourself together!” Michael furrowed his brows as he snapped at me. Besides empathy, there were flickers of rage in his eyes.

“Do you think I still have the right to ask for more?” I smiled bitterly. Even though it was just a simple wish, I could not even assure if it would become a reality. Thus, I always reminded myself not to build castles in the air.

“You’re worthy of something even better!” Michael commented domineeringly as he looked at me firmly.

At that, my heart skipped a beat. I was utterly touched at his words. After all, Natalie used to be the only one by my side all this while whenever I was down.

That night, I never let go of Michael as I cried my heart out to vent my anger and distress. Surprisingly, he was also unusually patient with me and did not push me away in exasperation. As my tears trickled down my cheeks profusely, I drifted off into sleep.

I woke up the next morning with a throbbing headache. Aside from that, I was feeling uncomfortable all over.

Massaging my temples, my mind was a complete blank. When I came to my senses again, I racked my brain, trying to recall what happened the previous night. But because I was probably too drunk, I could hardly remember anything.

“Well, well... You finally woke up. I thought you would sleep till this afternoon.” Michael’s mocking tone sounded abruptly from the side of the window.

I turned in the direction of his voice. To my surprise, he was standing in front of the window, gazing at me. As he had his back to the sunlight, I could not really make out his expression from his silhouette.

“W-Why are you still here? Are you not going to the office?” I looked at him and stammered sheepishly.

“Have you forgotten how drunk you were last night? You hugged me and cried for hours till midnight. As a result, my entire body is aching now. Yet, right now, you still have the heart to urge me to go to work?” He raised his brows and strode toward me.

I hugged him last night and cried for hours? Really?

I tried hard to recall what had actually happened the night before. Hmm... it seems that he’s right...

I can’t believe that I had cried and wailed in front of Michael last night! My disheveled appearance must’ve scared him! Ugh... What an embarrassment!

Meanwhile, Michael fixed his gaze on my face without uttering any words. Pin-drop silence ensued in the room, resulting in a tense atmosphere. Eventually, I mustered up my courage to break the silence and apologize to him awkwardly, “Um... I’m sorry. I didn’t mean it.”

“I’ll settle the issue with Emma!” Michael paused and enunciated, “Live your own life! You don’t have to put yourself in a tight spot because of anyone, not even your parents!”

He seldom talked to me about my family, and I understood that he was motivating me in a way. Deep down, I was grateful to him for his great concern.

“Michael, thank you.” I looked into his eyes to express my sincerest gratitude. To me, he had undoubtedly kept me a companion during my loneliest and most helpless moments. I was thankful to him for everything. Even if I knew that I must try to be strong, I really loved the moment when he tried to protect me. That was when I could feel his great concern for me.

Michael looked awkward when I thanked him sincerely. He shifted his gaze away from me as if he was trying to conceal his awkwardness. “Have a good rest today since it’s Saturday. I need to go out to take care of something.” After that, he strode out of the bedroom without hesitation.

I had no idea what Michael was occupied with on a Saturday. Anyway, I did not have any right to question him on that. Since I was still having a hangover headache, I grabbed the opportunity to get some sleep and relax.

By the time I woke up again, it was already in the afternoon. I was awakened by the ringtone of my phone.

I whipped out my phone beneath my pillow instantly. My brows knitted when I noticed that it was a call from my mom. I was pretty sure she was giving me the call to pester me into leaving Michael again.

Without hesitation, I hung up the phone. I had had enough the night before and was not in the mood to hear any of her pestering words.

Nonetheless, she was persistent this round. Not long after I hung up, my phone rang again. To my dismay, it was her again.

I grimaced in frustration as I did not feel like entertaining her. Even so, I was aware that it would only make things worse if I refused to answer her call. She might head straight to my office to confront me later. By then, the relationship between Michael and me would be revealed in broad daylight.

The moment I answered the call, my mom’s bellow of anger sounded from the other end of the line.

“Anna, how dare you hung up my call earlier. Do you still have any respect for me? Are you trying to give me a stroke?”

My temples started to throb because of my mom’s high-pitched tone again. Thus, I had to bring the phone further away from my ear. Even if I could

foresee her demeanor toward me after what happened yesterday, I could not resist but feel depressed and frustrated.

“Mom, I’m busy at the moment. If you make this call just to lash out at me, I’ll hang up now.” Still enraged with what happened the night before, I answered coldly and was about to hang up.

“What have you done? The woman named Emma has suddenly changed her mind. Anna, our one million is gone because of you! Damn it!” Before I could hang up, my mom lambasted again in utter exasperation.

I was too dumbfounded to speak. Has Emma really change her mind? Was Michael behind all this?

He was apparently the only person who could let Emma change her mind. Again, I was touched by what the man had done for me. When I was in deep waters, he came to my rescue again and had the issue resolved.

“I didn’t do anything, and I have no idea about it.” I placed the phone back to my ear and answered coldly.

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“How dare you tell me it’s not your fault when you’re the reason she has changed her mind?”

Mom refused to believe me and held me accountable for her loss once again.

Apart from Steven, money was the next thing she cared about the most. Since she wasn’t able to get her hands on the one million, she was devastated by the loss.

“Your opinion has nothing to do with me! I’ll repeat myself for one last time! This has nothing to do with me! I won’t agree to leave even if Emma doesn’t change her mind! It’s time for you to give up!”

As infuriated as Mom might be, I was equally irked. She had placed my future at stake for her personal gain.

Is she indicating that my future is nothing as compared to a million? Has she any idea of all the sacrifices I have made over the years? After

spending years to get to where I am, she's asking me to start all over again!

"You're such an ungrateful daughter! How dare you get full of yourself and talk back against me? Have you forgotten that I'm your mother?"

No matter how irritated I was back in the day, I would listen to her. That was the first time I made myself clear I wouldn't give in. She was taken aback by my response.

"Mom, if you think I'm taking you for granted, so be it! Over the years, I have tried my best to fulfill your demands! Stop pushing your luck unless you're ready to live a life without me!"

I had made up my mind to sever ties with them if she continued bringing up the absurd request. No longer could I stand them and their demands anymore.

They had never considered me a member of the family. In fact, they had brought upon nothing apart from misery in my life. Michael was right—no one, not even my parents, was in a position to mess with my life.

I won't tolerate them any further! I have been trying my best to please them over the years! It's about time to put an end to everything!

I had no intention to forsake them, but I thought I needed to consider my needs instead of placing others before myself. With that being said, I would no longer entertain any of their absurd requests.

Mom, who was on the other end, got increasingly infuriated. A few seconds of silence later, she yelled, "Are you trying to threaten me? Stop getting ahead of yourself just because you're an adult!"

"Mom, I'm not! Instead, you're the one who's pushing your luck! I can't believe you're willing to ruin my future over one million! What makes you think I'll agree to listen to you?"

I started burning with rage when I recalled Mom was about to turn my life upside down over one million. No one in their right mind, including me, would give in to their absurd demand.

"Y-You!"

"Mom, if there's nothing else, stop calling me in the future! I'll transfer two thousand to you on a monthly basis and nothing more! I won't entertain any of your silly requests anymore!"

I interrupted her before she could finish her sentence. As soon as I made myself clear, I wrapped up the conversation and hung up the call.

Two thousand was more than enough to cover their expenses living in the suburbs. I wouldn't mind giving them extra if they needed it for something else, such as visiting the doctor.

I had generated every single cent through working my ass off. It wouldn't be ridiculous to take care of Mom and Dad, but I wouldn't do the same for Steven. He had to stop relying on me when he was capable of making a living. I couldn't possibly support him throughout the rest of his life.

After blurting out the things I had in mind for a long time, I wasn't in the mood to sleep anymore.

Although I was upset things seemed to have gotten to the point of no return between Mom and me, I was glad to take it off my shoulders. I jumped out of bed and got myself dressed before heading out to make myself something to eat. After going through an entire day without having a meal, I couldn't stand it anymore.

The moment I reached the living room, Michael showed up in the foyer.

I asked, "Where have you been?"

I guessed Michael was the one behind Emma's sudden change of mind. Therefore, I was grateful for the things he had done behind the scenes.

If it weren't because of him, Mom would continue forcing me into submission with everything she had under her disposal.

He answered my query with an indifferent look, "I was out with Emma."

I knew he had resolved the issue on my behalf.

Smiling, I expressed my heartfelt gratitude. "Thanks, Michael! If it weren't because of you, my parents wouldn't have given up!"

"Actually, I'm not trying to do you a favor. I'm just resolving an issue of mine. I hate it when others poke their nose into my business. This is the second time Emma tries to cross the boundaries."

Michael had warned Emma to mind her own business. However, she continued pushing her luck after another few days. Thus, Michael couldn't stand it anymore.

Although he ensured me he had been doing it for his sake, I was glad to have him around. After all, I was the one who benefited the most.

“Actually, I’m afraid we won’t be able to keep our relationship confidential if Mom shows up at the company and make a fuss out of it.”

I was afraid she would show up at the company and stop me in person again since I had made myself clear that I wouldn’t give in no matter what.

Upon a simple glance, Michael nonchalantly replied as if it wasn’t a big deal, “Do you think the security guards are paid for standing around idly? If they’re not even able to stop your mom from making a scene, it’s time to terminate them and hire someone else for the job.”

“Have you forgotten the last time-”

I was about to tell him the time Mom managed to sneak into the company when the place was heavily guarded.

Aware of the things I had in mind, Michael asserted before I could finish my sentence, “They have been fired for not carrying out their duty. The ones I have hired won’t let anyone can’t identify themselves into the company without my consent.”

I heaved a long sigh of relief when I heard him. Otherwise, it was about time for me to leave the company should Mom show up and make a fuss.

Michael stared at me with his face scrunched up as I started losing myself in a train of thought.

He asked, “Aren’t you supposed to be getting our meal ready? Hurry up and get going!”

“O-Oh! I’ll do it at once!”

Seconds after I returned to my senses, I sprinted in the direction of the kitchen.

As it was way beyond lunch hours, I wondered why he had not had his lunch with Emma when he was out with her.

Unable to keep my curiosity to myself, I asked in anticipation of his reply, “Haven’t you eaten with Emma?”

He answered with his brows furrowed, “Huh? Do you think I’ll dine with someone who won’t stop getting on my nerves? How am I supposed to enjoy my meal when she’s around?”

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I was thrilled when I heard him regard Emma as someone he disliked. I wasn't supposed to gloat over others' misfortune, but I just couldn't help it.

Whenever Michael was around me, time would pass by in the blink of an eye. It felt as if nothing else mattered as long as Michael was there for me.

In the upcoming few days, Mom stopped bothering me. Emma had stopped showing up to pick on me as well. I thought that would be the end of the incident, but that was very naïve of me.

When I was on my way to the supermarket to buy the ingredients for dinner after getting off work, a luxury car pulled over in front of me and got in my way.

I arched my brows in confusion. The moment I tried to get past the car, the passenger wound down the window. A woman in her late-forties had her eyes glued to me.

She had dolled herself up with all sorts of designer items. It was safe to assume she was a member of the upper echelon.

When she caught me staring at her, she started scrutinizing me in return. A few seconds later, she popped a question, "Anna Garcia?"

Startled by the fact she knew my name, I asked, "Huh? Do you know me?"

Who is she? Are we acquainted by any chance?

I tried my best to recall the time we encountered one another, but my effort was to no avail as I was certain we weren't acquainted.

Instead of answering my query, she brought up something else and suggested with a deadpan look, "Ms. Garcia, care to join me for a cup of coffee?"

She was able to carry herself in an elegant manner befitting a member of the upper echelon throughout the conversation.

"I'm so sorry for being rude, but do you mind introducing yourself? I don't think we're acquainted by any means."

I was taken aback by her request to join her for a cup of coffee as I couldn't recall anyone else bringing up a similar request during our first encounter.

"I'll answer the queries you have soon enough. There's a café that's just around the corner. We'll head over and talk over a cup of coffee."

She wound up the window the moment she finished her sentence. A short while later, the car was pulled over in front of a nearby café.

As much as I tried to figure out her identity, my effort was to no avail. After all, a country bumkin like me couldn't possibly be acquainted with someone from the upper echelon.

Nonetheless, I ended up accepting the offer and making my way to the nearby café she had mentioned.

When I showed up, she had long taken a seat and started enjoying her cup of coffee in an elegant manner.

I brought myself to a halt before making my way over. There was something odd about her. Thus, I couldn't stop myself from being on my guard.

As soon as I took a seat opposite her, she broke the silence and asked, "Ms. Garcia, what would you like? It's my treat."

I had a hard time figuring out the emotions associated with the question due to her tone.

Unable to keep my curiosity to myself, I asked with a confused look, "Why don't you go ahead and answer my question? Who are you?"

"I'm Josephine. Josephine Blackwood. Michael's mother."

Josephine looked at me in the eyes and enunciated her reply.

What? She's Michael's mother? Why has she paid me a visit in person?

My mind was all over the place after I figured out her identity. I was afraid to look at her in the eyes and started looking elsewhere to avoid her gaze.

"Nice to meet you, Mrs. Shaw."

She asked with her eyes glued to me, "Ms. Garcia, forgive me for being blunt, but are you in some sort of relationship with Michael?"

I was overwhelmed by a sense of insecurity as I couldn't be sure if she was a friend or a foe.

"I..."

I ended up stuttering since I was at a loss for words. As a result, my eyes started flickering in despair.

"Ms. Garcia, are you aware that Michael is currently in a relationship with someone else? Emma is an exceptional young woman. To be frank, she's also the family's sweetheart."

I went dead silent in response to her question. Subsequently, Josephine carried on with the conversation in a calm and collected tone.

It sounded just like an ordinary conversation, but it was evident that her statements were double innuendos—she had indicated she wanted me to sever ties with Michael.

Judging by her choice of words, it was safe to assume she had misperceived me as the one messing up Michael and Emma's relationship.

Unable to withstand the humiliation, I rebuked, "Mrs. Shaw, I'm afraid you have misperceived the sort of relationship we have. We're nothing more—"

"Ms. Garcia, you do realize Michael needs a spouse who's on par with him in terms of social status, don't you? I don't mind him fooling around with others since he's still a young and reckless man. However, he's going to get married to Emma at the end of the day. I can't afford to have Michael's image tarnished. Are you aware of the things I'm talking about?"

Josephine interrupted me before I could finish my sentence. All along, she thought Michael hadn't been taking me seriously and deemed him fooling around with me.

Well, she wasn't that far off the mark either. At the end of the day, things would never work out between Michael and me. Nonetheless, it felt awful to have Josephine picking on me.

"Mrs. Shaw, I'm well aware of the things you're talking about. You don't have to worry because I have never tried to do anything silly to ruin Michael and Emma's relationship."

It was never my intention to ruin their relationship. As a matter of fact, Emma was the one who wouldn't stop picking on me.

When Josephine heard me, she nodded in return. She wasn't as pressing as she was a few minutes ago.

"Ms. Garcia, I believe you're also aware of the reason I have paid you a visit in person today. Therefore, please refrain from driving them apart from one another in the future."

She had paid me a visit in person to chase me away from Michael. Although she had made herself clear, there was nothing much I could do to turn her down.

"Mrs. Shaw, why don't you approach Michael instead of me if you want me to stay away from Michael? I have always been the subservient one in our relationship. In other words, I'm not in a position to sever ties with him without his consent. I'm sure you know how domineering he is, don't you?"

I had no choice but to leave Michael since Josephine had made herself clear. Otherwise, she might see me as another lustful woman.

As much as I was reluctant to leave him, I had to put an end to our relationship to salvage my almost none existent dignity.

Meanwhile, Josephine frowned when she heard me. Her frustration was written all over her face, but she chose to keep those to herself.

"I'll deal with Michael soon, but I need you to be slightly proactive as well! It takes two to tango—it's better to make up your mind as soon as possible to save yourself from being humiliated when the time comes."

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She had just indicated I would be reluctant to leave her exceptional son when it was time to put an end to our relationship.

In spite of being irked by Josephine's reply, I had to keep my emotions to myself since he was Michael's mother.

I looked at her in the eyes and asserted, "You don't have to worry, Mrs. Shaw. I'll stay away from Michael as soon as he severs ties with me. I'm just a country bumkin, but I'm at least capable of honoring my promises."

Michael was the only man I had in mind. However, I would stop getting in his way when everything was over. That was the least I could do to protect my little to none dignity.

Josephine was gratified by my promise. She beamed in satisfaction and complimented, "Ms. Garcia, you're a good woman. I believe you'll get yourself a better half in the future."

She started being courteous with me as soon as I promised her to stay away from Michael once everything was over. No way someone from the upper echelon would sincerely compliment a country bumkin.

"Thanks! If there's nothing else, allow me to excuse myself!"

Throughout the conversation we had, Josephine managed to carry herself in a courteous manner. However, I couldn't stand being anywhere near her when I recalled she was there to drive me apart from Michael. Unsure of the proper way to carry on with the conversation, I thought it was about time to leave.

Josephine didn't bother to stop me. When I was about to leave, she repeated herself, "Alright, Ms. Garcia! I hope you'll honor your promise when the time comes!"

Once again, my eyes flickered. Her reminder had got to me, but I put on a strong front and asserted, "I'll keep that in mind, but please deal with Michael on my behalf."

I had brought up countless requests to put an end to our relationship, but Michael wouldn't hesitate to turn me down. Therefore, it was better to send Josephine to deal with Michael.

"You don't have to worry. I have faith Michael will make the right call when the situation calls for it."

She reassured me things would turn out just fine at the end of the day. To be precise, she had just indicated Michael would listen to her because I was just a nobody.

Afraid I would let loose of myself in front of her, I nodded and strode my way out of the café as soon as possible.

Josephine had made herself clear she would never accept me as Michael's better half. It was then I stopped getting my hopes high as things would never work out between Michael and me.

It wasn't much of a surprise as I had long foreseen it happening. However, it still hurt in spite of getting myself prepared ever since the day we got into a relationship.

Afraid of the things awaiting me, I started wandering the streets after departing from the café. I lost myself in a train of thoughts and imagined how things would turn out differently if we were in a serious relationship.

Nonetheless, that would remain an imagination. Most of the members of the upper echelon would end up in a political marriage for their family's sake. As I couldn't be of much aid to Michael and his family, things would never work out between us.

I soon made my way back to Birchwood. However, Michael was nowhere to be seen yet. I started surveying the surroundings of the place where we spent most of our time together.

No matter how much I was against the idea, I would have to make the call for our sake. Otherwise, we would both end up miserably should things remain as they had always been.

After returning to my bedroom, I started packing my stuff. I was determined to leave the place after bidding farewell to Michael when he was back.

I had a hard time gathering my thoughts while packing my stuff. The one thing I could be certain of was I would be upset to leave the place.

All of a sudden, someone opened the door from outside. I thought it must be Michael. Immediately after I zipped my suitcase, I rushed in the direction of the living room.

Michael, who seemed to be exhausted, glanced at me and took a seat on the couch in silence.

I felt bad on his behalf as he seemed to have a long day again. Although he was the CEO of the company, there were a lot of things on his plate that would require his attention.

Standing in front of the exhausted man, I hesitated and thought it wouldn't be wise to bring up the topic to put an end to our relationship. However, when I recalled his mother's harsh remarks, I knew I couldn't afford to drag it on any longer.

In the end, after making up my mind, I looked at him in the eyes and asserted, "Michael, I have something to tell you."

Michael furrowed his brows and asked, "What is it about?"

I looked elsewhere to avoid his gaze when I caught him looking in my direction. All of a sudden, I was tongue-tied.

He had no intention to get to the bottom of it since I started stuttering. After he took another peek at me, he instructed, "I'm hungry. If there's nothing else, hurry up and go get dinner ready."

After standing in front of him in silence for a few minutes, I braced myself and denoted, "Michael, it's about time for me to leave."

He turned around and had his eyes glued to me in shock. Without a doubt, he was startled by the things I had brought up out of the blue.

He jolted up from the couch and raised his volume against me. His wrath was written all over his scrunched-up face.

"What did you just say? Say it again!"

As he started emanating an intimidating presence and confronted me, I lowered my gaze and repeated, "It's about time for me to leave."

My heart wouldn't stop racing, but that hadn't stopped me from honoring the promise I had with Josephine.

His expression darkened within a few seconds. Gritting his teeth in an attempt to suppress his wrath, he gasped out his reply, "Anna, have I not mentioned you're not in a position to bring that up?"

I was afraid he would take things out on me, but I couldn't care less since Josephine had indicated she wanted me to stay away from her son. She would deem me a shameless woman should I continue staying in touch with him.

I mustered my courage and looked at him in the eyes. "Your mother came to see me today."

"What?" he asked in a callous tone with his eyes flickering in bewilderment.

"She asked me out for a cup of coffee with her and told me Emma was your only designated better half. Therefore, she wanted me to stay away from you and stop meddling with your relationship with Emma. I-"

I left the rest of my sentence unfinished, but I was certain Michael had figured out the reason I brought up the request to sever ties with him out of the blue.