

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 281

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Chapter 281 Harassed

I bet he's thinking of something along the lines of "Are you really not going to give me another chance, Anna? We've been together for seven years! Can you really let go?" I might've actually softened up and forgiven him if he came apologizing sincerely like this shortly after our breakup, but... now that I've fallen in love with Michael, sweet-talking no longer has any effect on me.

I looked at him emotionlessly and said in a neutral tone, "I've gotten over it long ago, Justin. I don't love you anymore, so please leave me alone from now on. Besides, you have Mabel now."

The thought of Justin having sex with my former best friend still disgusted me, and it was most likely the most disgusting thing I had experienced my entire life.

Justin's expression changed the moment I mentioned Mabel, and he grabbed my hand again as he explained, "I've broken up with Mabel ever since I realized you are the one I love. Will you please come back to me, Anna? I promise I'll only love you for the rest of my life, and I won't betray you ever again!"

Justin broke up with Mabel? Now that's a surprise. For some reason, I can't help but feel like there's more to Justin's request for reconciliation than it seems.

"What about your child? Why did you break up with Mabel when you two have a child together? If what you said is true, then that just makes you a much more irresponsible man than I imagined. There's no way in hell I'd ever be with someone like that!"

As if anyone would believe the words of a man who breaks up with the woman he has a child with... When I found out about their affair, Justin begged me to give them my blessings, saying that he actually loved Mabel. Did he forget what he said back then?

Justin grew increasingly anxious when he realized his explanations had backfired. He desperately tried to explain himself again. "I'm telling you the truth, Anna! I can let go of everything else just to be with you! Will you please believe me?"

Having lost all of my patience from talking to him, I brushed his arm off forcefully and said, "I told you, I'm not getting back with you. Don't forget that Michael is my boyfriend now, and I doubt you'd be able to keep your job as manager if he sees you here."

Justin's relentless behavior left me with no choice but to bring up Michael. Since he was working as a manager in the department store that Michael owned, I figured I would be able to scare him off by threatening him with that.

Justin's expression became twisted the moment he heard Michael's name, and I quickly walked away while he was distracted.

However, I had only taken a few steps when Justin hugged me from behind all of a sudden.

The thought of him being so close to me disgusted me to no end, and I struggled with all of my might while shouting angrily, "What the hell do you think you're doing, Justin? Let go of me!"

Justin's actions had truly infuriated me, and it was the first time I had hated him so much.

"I love you, Anna! Will you please come back to me?" he shouted desperately while keeping his arms wrapped tightly around me.

Enraged by his stubbornness, I stomped him hard on the foot and hurt him enough to let go of me.

I then seized that opportunity and ran off as quickly as my legs could carry me.

Justin used to be the dearest to me, but fear was the only thing I felt when he hugged me at the time.

His sudden appearance left a bad taste in my mouth, and I couldn't get it out of my head even after I went back home.

I had no idea how Justin knew where I was, and I was afraid that he would keep showing up outside my residential area in the future.

It didn't take long before my phone began ringing again, and I quickly whipped it out to see who it was as I feared it was Justin calling.

I felt relieved when I checked the caller ID and saw Natalie's name on it.

That was when I recalled we were supposed to go shopping together, but Justin's harassment left me feeling uneasy, so I told her I wasn't feeling well and hung up after canceling our date.

Natalie knew I had a tendency to be moody during pregnancy and didn't say much apart from telling me to rest well.

Fearing that I would bump into Justin again, I stayed home for the rest of the day.

Fortunately for me, Michael didn't come home very late that night, and I felt a lot safer with him around.

I went up to greet him and helped carry his briefcase the moment he stepped through the door.

He broke into a bright smile when he saw how caring I was, and the two of us made our way toward the couch with me in his arms.

"You've been cooped up at home for the past few days. Don't you want to go shopping or something?" Michael asked with a gentle look in his eyes while I lay in his embrace.

Hearing that reminded me of my encounter with Justin earlier, and I winced in response without saying anything.

"What's the matter? You don't look so good. Are you feeling unwell?" Michael asked worriedly when he noticed the look on my face.

He had been very concerned about my well-being ever since he knew about my pregnancy, and I knew he was worried about me and my baby.

"N-No..."

His question snapped me out of my daze, and I quickly averted my gaze as I didn't dare look him in the eye.

I had wanted to tell Michael about what happened, but I was afraid he would get mad.

Knowing how possessive and petty he was, I eventually decided to keep it from him. Since it was impossible for Justin and me to get back together, telling Michael about it would just anger him for no reason.

"Are you sure you're all right?" Michael knew me best and asked me again after eyeing my expression.

“Yeah, I’m really fine. I’m just a little bored from staying home all day. Maybe you can take me out shopping this weekend?”

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Chapter 282 Photographs Taken

Michael had been busy with work and our wedding preparations ever since we were together. We barely spent time with each other.

I knew staying at home all day was bad for my baby’s development, but I was afraid of bumping into Justin if I went out by myself, so having Michael take me out was the only option.

“Sure, we’ll go buy some baby products at the department store this weekend.”

Michael really spoiled me a lot. He agreed to my request without any hesitation.

Michael no longer needed to keep our relationship a secret as everyone had already known about it, and that caused a drastic change in his attitude toward me.

The affectionate look in his eyes filled my heart with happiness, and I wished I could just spend the rest of my life by his side.

He held me tightly in his embrace as we lay in bed that night, and I had a sweet smile on my face the whole time.

I spent the next two days counting down the hours till the weekend, looking forward to spending some quality time with Michael.

After what seemed like forever, the weekend finally arrived. As Michael was the owner of the department store, everyone greeted him respectfully the moment they saw him.

Although he was used to such treatment, I was not and could feel everyone staring at me.

As news of me ruining Michael’s wedding had shocked the entire country, it made perfect sense that they all knew who I was.

We soon made our way to the baby's department, and I found myself getting a little overwhelmed by the huge variety of products available. Nevertheless, I still looked forward to my baby being born.

Despite being less than two months pregnant, I had already started wondering if my child would end up resembling me or Michael.

"Hey, Michael, do you think we should buy male or female clothes for our baby?" I asked, feeling conflicted when I saw the clothing options; the gender of my baby was still unknown.

Deep down inside, I was hoping for my baby to be a girl so I could dress her up like a princess every day.

"Since we don't know the baby's gender, we can just buy both. Who knows, we might get a boy and a girl!" Michael said after glancing at the clothes in my hand, leaving me completely speechless.

The doctors already told us I'm pregnant with a healthy baby, so how could we possibly have a boy and a girl?

Not wanting to argue with Michael, I bought clothes for both genders as I didn't know if my baby was a boy or a girl.

We were probably the only couple who would shop for baby products as early as two months into the pregnancy.

Michael and I ended up buying a lot of things, and they were all the most expensive ones in the department store. But I found it worth the money as it was all for our child.

We were both in a great mood on the drive home when Michael got a text message on his phone. He then slowed down the car to check his phone, only to slam his foot on the brakes when he saw the message.

Had it not been for the seat belt preventing me from hurtling forward, I would have ended up badly injured as a result.

Still a little shaken up by his actions earlier, I looked at Michael, who was staring at his phone gloomily, and asked in confusion, "What's the matter, Michael? What happened?"

Instead of answering my question, Michael simply turned to look at me with rage in his eyes.

I felt even more confused and had a bad feeling in my gut when I saw his sudden change in expression.

"What on earth is going on, Michael? Why do you look so upset?" I asked a second time, feeling a little nervous about his silence.

"Anna, you're still keeping in touch with Justin?"

I panicked when he mentioned Justin and went pale as I recalled what happened the other day.

Michael perceived my response as a sign of guilty conscience, and he cut me off coldly before I could even answer his question, "After all this while... you still haven't let go of Justin, huh?"

His tone was filled with suspicion, and his eyes were burning with rage.

His questioning left me flustered and angry at the same time. My eyes began to tear up as I met his gaze and shouted, "No! I've forgotten all about Justin a long time ago! There is nothing between us at all!"

Unbelievable! After all we've been through just to be together, does Michael still not believe in my love for him? What Justin did hurt me deeply and disgusted me to the core, so why on earth would I even want to miss him at all?

Michael seemed to have anticipated my reply, and he wasn't buying it at all.

"How do you explain this, then?" He tossed his phone onto my lap with a terrifyingly cold look in his eyes.

I picked it up in confusion, only to have my mind go completely blank when I saw the picture of Justin hugging me from behind.

The photo was taken at a very clever angle which made it seem like we were a couple madly in love, and I looked like I wasn't resisting his embrace at all.

Wait... This was taken when Justin came to see me two days ago! Who took it? How did it end up on Michael's phone?

"Michael, I can explain! It's true that Justin came to see me two days ago, but I made myself very clear that I don't love him anymore! I even told him to stay away from me in the future!"

Had I not known that this picture was taken when Justin came to harass me that day, I wouldn't know how to explain it to Michael at all.

“Then why didn’t you tell me about it? How many more secrets are you keeping from me, Anna?”

Michael’s eyes were still filled with rage as he continued to glare at me. Had this conversation taken place in the past, he would have done more than just question me from his seat like this.

“I was just afraid that you’d get mad, Michael! I’m telling the truth!”

The sight of his handsome face being twisted with anger made me incredibly anxious. Michael is a very possessive man, so there is no way he’d let his woman have any intimate contact with another guy. I chose to keep it from him because I know that all too well.

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Chapter 283 A Strained Relationship

I looked at Michael apprehensively, clueless of how I could convince him that everything between Justin and I was over.

He gave me a cold stare, uttering no words, and stepped on the gas.

I screamed at the top of my lungs as I gripped the handles, fearing that the car would skid off the road at high speed.

My face turned ashen as I stared in front of me anxiously. Michael turned to glance at me and slowed down a bit, probably because he sensed how terrified I was. Even so, he still looked grim, paying no heed to me after that.

I kept my head lowered as though I was a kid feeling guilty of a wrongful deed. After all, Justin was my ex-boyfriend. It was normal for Michael to be infuriated, although Justin was the one bothering me. Nonetheless, I was clueless as to why Justin would contact me again all of a sudden.

I trailed behind Michael when we reached home. He turned and left after opening the door.

Astounded by the abruptness, I had wanted to call out to him to hold him back, but he had walked far away.

Knowing that he was still feeling annoyed, I was down in the dumps as I racked my brain about how I could convince him to believe me.

I sat on the couch in the living room and waited for Michael to be home. He had promised to marry me and form a sweet family with me. Hence, I was sure as hell that he would be back again.

As time elapsed, I could not resist feeling anxious. There was still no sign of him.

I took out my phone, wanting to call Michael. But it was then it rang abruptly. At the sight of Justin's name blinking on the screen, I felt like hanging up at once.

Thinking of how his pestering days ago had landed me in hot water today, I was irritated and my heart was filled with hatred.

If not for his sudden appearance, others would not have taken the photo and sent it to Michael.

At that thought, I changed my mind to answer his call.

"Anna, what are you doing?" Justin's gentle voice sounded on the other end of the line. I was boiling with anger again the moment I heard his voice.

"Justin, I've made myself clear the other day. Please don't call me up or appear in front of me ever again. I don't love you anymore, and I'm in love with someone else. So please stop meddling in my life again!" I snapped at him, turning a deaf ear to Justin's gentleness.

I must make myself clear today. I must not let him continue to be a hand grenade between Michael and me that will go off at any moment.

"Anna, what's the matter with you?" Justin asked in bafflement.

"That's none of your business! Just don't appear in front of me ever again. Goodbye!" I wrapped up the conversation and hung up right away, sick of my entanglement with him earlier that day.

Taking a deep breath, I tried my best to tamp down the simmering fury within myself. Even though I had vented my frustration at Justin, my heart sank when I thought about the strained relationship between Michael and me.

After hesitating for quite a while, I searched for Michael's number and gave him a call.

The connecting tone sent me into a tizzy. I could barely wait for him to pick up the call.

However, things did not turn out as expected. The line on the other end went dead almost in an instant. He had hung up on me right away.

My heart thumped in utter helplessness. I felt even more restless as I started making wild guesses as to why he refused to answer my call.

Now that we did not have to keep mum about our relationship anymore, I was worried sick that he would abandon me due to a misunderstanding. He and our baby were my everything, so I could not lose him.

I tried to call him again, but the line went dead as he hung up on me again.

Deep down, I could not explain why I was getting more desperate. If Michael were to hang up on me previously, I would not be bothered to make a second attempt. However, at that moment, I could not control myself from trying to reach him.

Since he refused to answer my call, I sent him a text message instead, telling him that everything between Justin and me had ended long ago. Apart from that, I emphasized that he was the only person I was deeply in love with.

After sending the text message, I waited for a long time. Even so, there was no response from him, not even a simple text message.

As Michael was rather impatient, I knew he would be enraged if I bombarded him with phone calls and text messages. Hence, I tried my best to cool my head off and refrain myself from interrupting him.

Leaning against the back of the couch, I told myself to wait patiently, but I was gradually overcome by sleepiness when there were still no signs of him. I ended up dozing off on the couch and had a dream.

In my dream, Michael wanted to break up with me. Undoubtedly, Justin was the cause of everything. Regardless of how hard I tried to explain to Michael that I only loved him, he would not believe me. He shrugged off my hand coldly and strode away without even sparing me another glance.

I freaked out as he was moving further away from me. By the time I opened my eyes abruptly and scanned around the living room, only then did I realize it was just a dream.

I wiped off the cold sweat on my forehead and was still rattled by the dream, fearing that the scene would turn into a reality.

I glanced at the clock on the wall. It's almost midnight and Michael is still not back... Is he really not going to come back?

I picked up my phone. There were neither missed calls nor text messages from him. I put down my phone in despair, my heart aching.

Suddenly, I heard the door open and turned in anticipation. My eyes lit up at once as Michael's figure came into sight.

I put on my slippers hastily and made a dart toward him. When I was alongside him, I smelled a strong scent of alcohol.

"Did you drink?" I asked in great concern.

He seemed to have drunk a lot more than usual. As a mature and staid man, he seldom drank so much.

I tried to hold him, but he shoved me away instantaneously and stared at me coldly.

The usual gentleness and affection in his eyes were completely gone. My heart thumped. I knew he was still mad at me.

"Michael, I don't have the slightest feeling for Justin anymore. You have to trust me." I enunciated every word solemnly, looking into his eyes.

That was my very first time trying to clarify something in such an apprehensive way. I can't let Michael misunderstand me again! I must eliminate any petty matters that will ruin our relationship!

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Chapter 284 He Approaches Me With A Hidden Motive

Michael continued to gaze at me nonchalantly in silence. There were not any hints of emotion in his eyes. I could not resist wondering if he believed in my words. Subsequently, I felt a prickle of anxiousness as another wave of uncertainty swept over me.

I held my breath as I lowered my head and gripped the side of my blouse. My heart was pounding hard; my mind turned into mush. What if he came back to break up with me?

As Michael continued to gaze at me without uttering any words, my lips tightened into a thin line.

“Anna Garcia, I wonder when you will start to think wisely with your brain!” Michael finally spoke after a long while.

I scratched my head in perplex, unable to understand what he actually meant. Thinking wisely with my brain?

I looked into his eyes, mustering up my courage to ask him, “What do you mean?”

Michael walked into the living room and sat on the couch. Tossing me a frigid glance, he scoffed, “Don’t you know that someone deliberately took the photo? Do you think there is an ideal spot for such a high-definition photo to be taken?”

My heart skipped a beat as something came into my mind. “Do... you mean to say that Justin did that on purpose?”

As the question escaped my lips, a surge of panic crept into my heart. It was an indecipherable feeling when I found out that someone had set me up.

“Remember to use your brain next time!”

I was astounded by his words. What is playing on Justin’s mind? We have not been contacting each other for more than half a year. Why did he assign people to snap this photo?

Is he trying to blackmail me? No, it can’t be. He doesn’t have the audacity to do so. Not to mention he is Michael’s employee. What is the point of shooting himself in the foot by blackmailing his boss?

I scratched my head quizzically again, wondering why Justin had done so.

“Anyway, I will investigate this matter thoroughly. You’d better mark my words, Anna. You are my woman now. You are not allowed to spare other men any glance, especially your ex-boyfriend!” Michael sat upright and glared at me with his blazing eyes. He was even gritting his teeth when he said those last few words. He seemed to be green with envy at the thought that I might cross paths with Justin again at any time.

Even so, I heaved a sigh of relief as he did not mention breaking up with me. I felt thankful that the worst did not occur as expected, despite the utter grimness on his face.

Feeling delighted, I approached him and sat down next to him. Holding onto his arm, I finally felt a sense of security and cooled off.

"I will never fall for another man. You are the love of my life," I mumbled affectionately to him.

Michael was the only man in my eyes at that moment. I was certain that I would not be drawn to any other man again. I yearned to spend the rest of my life with him.

My words seemed to have appeased him. There was finally a slight change in his countenance as he softened up.

Since then, two days went past as usual. Michael was so occupied with both his work matters and the investigation on Justin that he could not allocate time to accompany me. Even though I was feeling a bit down, I knew I should not distract him from sorting things out.

I grabbed the chance to tidy up the baby products we bought from the shopping mall that day. Whenever I imagined how adorable our child would look in the baby clothes, I was on top of the world.

Right then, the ringing of my phone interrupted my contemplation. To my dismay, it was still a call from Justin. I recalled how Michael had warned me to have no truck with him again. Nonetheless, I could barely wait to find out why he was thinking of reconciling with me.

After pondering for quite a while, I decided to answer his call. Justin must have presumed that I might not answer his call as he was stunned for a while before shrieking with joy, "Anna! It's so great to hear your voice! I almost thought you wouldn't answer my call anymore!"

Ever since I knew that he was approaching me with a hidden motive, I loathed him even more.

"Justin Xenakis, what do you want?" I raised my voice.

I would not believe it if he said he was thinking of mending the relationship with me. My gut instinct told me he must have some ploys in his mind.

"Anna, you know how I feel about you, don't you? There are so many things I want to say to you. Can we meet up somewhere?" Justin said, instead of replying to my question.

If Michael did not tell me that Justin was approaching me with a hidden motive, I would most probably reject him right away. However, I did not

feel like turning him down at the moment as I was curious about his exact motive.

Therefore, I agreed to meet him at a café not far from Birchwood half an hour later.

Prevailed by the eagerness to find out the truth, I reached the café slightly earlier than the scheduled time. To my surprise, he arrived even earlier than me.

“Anna, this way.” Justin waved at me jubilantly with a bright smile on his face the moment I stepped into the café.

I made my way toward him in utter indifference, suppressing the waves of hatred surging from within me.

Seated opposite him, I only ordered a glass of plain water. I could not take coffee as I was pregnant.

“So, why did you call me out?” I went straight to the point.

“Nothing much. I just wanted to look at you. Anna, do you know how much I have missed you all this while? I want to contact you every day, but I don’t have the courage to do so. I regret hurting you previously. I feel guilty and ashamed of facing you,” Justin uttered sincerely and gazed at me lovingly.

Pfft! He is indeed good at acting. That kind of look and tone! I would be touched if I didn’t know his exact temperament.

Nevertheless, I was no longer the innocent girl years ago whom he could effortlessly coax with his sweet nothings. I almost burst into laughter at the sight of his pretentious look. Hah! It never crossed my mind that men can be good at putting up a show like women too!

“Since you are ashamed of facing me, why did you insist on looking for me? Don’t you think you are contradicting yourself?” I scoffed.

He was dumbfounded. Perhaps he didn’t expect me to be so straightforward as there was a hint of sheepishness on his face.

“I... Anna, I know you must be thinking that I’m a man with no sense of responsibility. But I’m remorseful and have decided to turn over a new leaf. I’m sorry for what I have done. Can you grant me a chance to prove my sincerity?” Justin pleaded for my forgiveness.

If Michael did not warn me about how despicable Justin was, I would believe that he was making a sincere apology.

I was never a cold-hearted woman who would make a fuss out of nothing. But Justin's emergence with a hidden motive had stirred up trouble and indirectly strained the relationship between Michael and me. My loathing toward him was beyond description.

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Chapter 285 My Greatest Happiness Is To Be With You

"I know exactly who you are, Justin. You don't have to waste time beating around the bush. Just tell me right away what you want from me! What is on your mind?" I grimaced and snapped at him coldly. I had had enough of him babbling to me in such a pretentious way.

At that instant, I spotted a sudden change in Justin's countenance. There were unmissable flickers of shock and panic in his eyes. Regardless of how well he was bottling up his emotions, I had a gut feeling that he had something up his sleeves.

"Anna, I don't get what you mean. How can I have any hidden motive? I'm pleading for your forgiveness and trying to make it up to you. I wish to win your heart again so you can be back by my side." Justin continued to put on a sincere look and gazed at me with a hint of guilt in his eyes.

If I were unaware of his wicked mind, I would surely relent at the sight of his sincerity. Even if it was impossible for me to forgive him, I would soften up and stop striking him with harsh words. Nevertheless, the unmistakable anxiety that flashed across his eyes a while ago had convinced me that he was up to something.

"Can you please stop putting on a show? We were together for seven years. Do you think you can hide your true colors from me? Just be frank with me. What is your intention of approaching me? Or perhaps you intend to drive a wedge between Michael and me?" I questioned him directly.

I presumed he intended to destroy my relationship with Michael by setting me up. That explained why the photo was sent to Michael deliberately, and it was the only reason I could think of at that moment.

I was actually trying to sound him out by asking him intentionally, and I was proven right when a hint of disbelief flickered in his eyes. So his exact motive is to strain the relationship between Michael and me!

“Why did you do that to me? We have broken up for such a long time and haven’t crossed paths with each other since then. Why are you messing up my life now? Why are you doing this!”

The only thing I wanted right now was to be with Michael. I would not forgive anyone who tried to destroy our relationship.

“Anna, don’t get me wrong. I came looking for you because I really wish to get back together with you. Apart from that, I don’t have any other motives. You have to trust me.” Justin was still giving excuses to talk me into believing his words.

No matter what, I reminded myself not to fall into his trap. He was not merely thinking of reconciling with me.

“If you are really feeling guilty for what you have done, please stop interfering with my life again. I will never be together with you for the rest of my life. Michael is the man whom I’m deeply in love with!” I snarled at him.

Since Justin was trying to cover up his motive by all means, there was nothing I could do without concrete evidence. I could only make my stance clear that I would not fall for any other man again except Michael.

Justin’s face turned grim. Nevertheless, I was not in the mood to bicker with him again. I stood up and turned away from him.

“Anna...” Justin called out my name behind me, trying to say something to hold me back.

I turned a blind eye to him and strode out of the café without looking back.

Arriving home, I was getting more desperate to know what Justin wanted to do. We have not met each other for such a long time. Why did he come to see me?

When Michael came back, we had dinner as usual. Seated opposite him, I hesitated if I should bring up the topic about Justin.

I could barely wait to know what was going on. However, I did not dare to voice my doubt, fearing that I would infuriate the man unintentionally by mentioning Justin’s name.

"Just say it right away if you have something in your mind," Michael piped up, sensing that I had something to say.

Hearing that, I put down my fork and gazed into his eyes. "I want to know why Justin is looking for me."

I looked at Michael anxiously after saying that, worried that he would lash out at any moment.

Surprisingly, he only furrowed his brows and did not flip out.

"I bet it has something to do with Emma, but I can't jump to a conclusion right now as we are still in the midst of the investigation," Michael explained nonchalantly as if he was talking about something casual.

I knitted my brows when I heard Emma's name. This woman has been coming at me all this while. Michael and I are getting married and she is still thinking of stirring up trouble? Damn it! She is just too much!

I was livid. How I wished to confront her at once. Michael doesn't like her, but she refuses to let go of him. My goodness! I wonder if she has any sense of shame!

"How do Emma and Justin know each other? What is going on?" I asked again in bewilderment.

I was doubtful about the relationship between Emma and Justin. I did not think there was any possibility that the two of them were into something together. As a materialistic person, I bet Justin would not be willing to team up with her in anything without any benefit in return.

Michael replied placidly, "I was notified that both of them seem to be liaising closely with each other via phone calls. Anyway, it will take a little more time before anything can be traced."

Since Michael was still awaiting further details on the investigation, I knew I would not be able to clear my doubt on what was happening. However, I believed he would not be mad at me again after knowing that Emma was manipulating everything.

"If Emma turns out to be the one manipulating everything, what are you going to do?" I asked warily.

"Even till now, my mom still likes her a lot. What do you think I can do?" Michael frowned.

He did not state clearly what could be done to get the matter resolved. However, it seemed that there was nothing he could do, even if he knew that Emma was the mastermind because his mother would surely stand up for her under any circumstances.

Feeling dejected like a deflated balloon, I told myself to cheer up with Michael's determination to be with me. After all, she was still Michael's mother, and I never had the intention of instigating him into having a falling-out with his mother.

"You don't have to worry. I won't marry that woman again," he said firmly before lowering his head and continuing eating. I bet he must have sensed what was bugging my mind.

Michael's promise managed to ease my frustration. Undeniably, his words meant everything to me. As long as he promised to stand by my side forever, I had nothing to fear.

I gazed affectionately at him and uttered solemnly, "Michael, my greatest happiness is to spend the rest of my life with you."

I could foresee there would be obstacles awaiting us if I insisted on being together with Michael, but there was nothing for me to fear as long as I could be with him.

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Chapter 286

[/ Love from My Dominant Boss](#)
Chapter 286 Insecurity

Michael's hand froze at my words. He looked at me, an indecipherable expression in his gaze. Sometime later, he wordlessly turned his attention back to his food.

I was not angry that he had not said anything in response. He was introverted, and I saw no need in forcing him to profess his love for me in all sorts of grand manners. I know that he loves me, and that's enough for me.

After dinner, I lay on the bed, tossing and turning as I struggled to fall asleep. Our wedding was but a week away, yet Josephine still hoped that Michael was marrying Emma. I was worried that she would refuse to give her blessings during our wedding.

Deep in my heart, I knew that marrying Michael would make me the happiest person alive. Still, that did not mean that I could not care less about his family's blessing.

I flopped over and slung an arm around Michael's waist, sighing as I did so.

"What's wrong?" I would never grow tired of Michael's alluring tone.

"Michael, do you sometimes regret choosing me?" I lifted my head and asked timidly, gazing at his moonlit profile.

"It's late. You should get some sleep instead of worrying yourself over such nonsense." He frowned at my question, evidently displeased.

"Well, I feel guilty. Your relationship with your mom wouldn't be strained today without me in the picture. I can't help but worry if this is going to make you regret our relationship years down the line." Shifting myself to nestle in his embrace, I ignored Michael's frown and voiced my concerns.

Michael may have kept mum about his relationship with his mother, but I could sense that my presence had driven a wedge between them.

They were family at the end of the day. I did not think that my concern over his potential resentment was unwarranted.

Michael lowered his head and gave me a piercing stare. "Anna, if you insist on filling your head with such ridiculous ideas, I'll show you right now that you're the only person I could ever love. Aren't my actions obvious enough? Or do you need me to repeat myself?"

I knew Michael would never joke about such a thing. I'm trying to engage him in a serious conversation here! Why is his mind turning to sex? Sometimes, I swear I have no idea how his mind works.

Despite my dissatisfaction with his threat, I bit my tongue and kept quiet; I was well aware of his personality. The slightest protest was all the motivation he needed to fulfill his threat.

We may have been living together now, but beyond that first night, Michael had refrained from being intimate with me for our baby's safety. Every time I happened to see the longing in his gaze, the guilt in my heart grew a little more.

I knew he was struggling to keep his urge in check for the baby in my womb. His efforts alone spoke volumes about how much he loved and cherished me.

I closed my eyes and pretended to fall asleep, though I could feel his gaze burning a hole through my body.

He can't possibly be thinking of doing it, right?

"Anna?" Michael's voice had gone hoarse, betraying his lust and desire.

"Yes?" I grew nervous at his tone, sensing that his self-control was about to snap at any moment.

"I can't wait anymore."

The sheets rustled from Michael's movement, and I saw a faint glow coming from the nightlight he had just switched on. The light illuminated his handsome face and imbued the room with a romantic ambiance.

My heartbeat quickened at his words, a plethora of emotions whirling in my heart.

It was a heart wrenching decision to refuse him, but I had to prioritize the safety of the baby. I spoke hesitantly, "The first trimester is the most dangerous period—"

Michael cut in, "I promise I'll be gentle. I won't hurt the baby."

In the next moment, he placed his hand on my shoulder and caressed my arm, sliding it down toward my elbow.

I began shivering, desire and logic warring in my mind. I knew what he was about to do, yet it seemed a herculean task to voice my objection. His ragged breathing was gradually chipping away at my insistence.

Even on our first night together, it was evident that he had been holding back. I found myself softening even more toward his struggles.

"Michael, I—"

"Not a word." He pressed a finger on my lips to silence me.

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Chapter 287 Succumbing To Desire

I glared at Michael's cheery expression. His grin soon turned wicked, and I scoffed, burying my head into his chest.

He placed his mouth right next to my ear and whispered, "Someone seems enthusiastic."

The sensation of his warm breath grazing my ears sent goosebumps all over my skin. I would be lying if I said I was not the least bit tempted to give in to desire.

Right on cue, my face became as red as a tomato. I turned my head away to avoid meeting his eyes.

Michael knew me as well as I knew him. Instead of getting upset at my silence, he merely let his hands do the talking.

His teasing touches were driving me crazy, bringing me to the edge of ecstasy before retreating and leaving me hanging. Is he going to mess around with me like this the whole night?

Annoyed, I shoved him away and prepared to turn around and sleep.

Michael seemed to have caught on to my intention. He upped the ante before I managed to push him away.

To my horror, I closed my eyes and actually moaned. I was starting to lose myself in a web of desire.

Hazily, I saw Michael admiring my facial expression with a knowing smile.

My reaction was a test of self-control for him as well. His admiring gaze soon turned into repressed longing as my pleasure intensified. His patience was hanging on a thin line, and it was only a matter of time before he snapped.

"Help me take it off," Michael groaned into my ear.

Always a sucker for his low and rich baritone voice, my heart tingled with need. My hands started moving on their own accord and fumbled for his pajamas.

The dim glow of the nightlight was more than enough for me to admire his chiseled body. I could not help but swallow as a fresh wave of lust overwhelmed me. I knew without a doubt that Michael was the fittest and most attractive man I knew.

My ogling seemed to please Michael, who wore a triumphant smirk on his face. I guess he was not immune to admiration shown by the woman he loved.

“Faster. I can’t wait anymore!”

Michael found his release just as I thought I was about to collapse in exhaustion.

We were both panting heavily at the end. Michael stared at my flushed cheeks and smirked knowingly before pulling me into his arms.

I was secretly pleased when I heard the sound of his rapid heartbeat. Slingsing my arm over his waist, I sighed in satisfaction.

As our wedding day approached, I spent my days suspended in a sort of anxious anticipation. Despite my concerns over how the wedding would turn out, I knew that I would be happy as long as I could be with Michael.

That evening, I decided to get some groceries at the supermarket and whip up some of Michael’s favorite dishes. All this while, the housekeeper had prepared all our meals according to my pregnancy cravings, which often clashed with Michael’s preferences.

Since I noticed that he had been eating less than usual as a result, I wanted to surprise him with a homecooked meal seasoned to his tastes.

I smiled at the thought of preparing a comforting meal for my husband-to-be. Soon, I was ready to leave for the supermarket.

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Chapter 288 The Bitter Reality Of Coffee

Michael had showered me with so much love these days that I could not help but think of this period as the most blissful time of my life.

I had just set foot beyond the main gates of our development when a black Mercedes-Benz drove up to me and stopped, blocking my path.

I frowned slightly, displeased at the driver’s manners. Since I was in an excellent mood, I decided to let it go and walk around the car. Suddenly, the back window of the car was lowered. I was Josephine inside the car.

Her unannounced visit made my heart sink. I had a bad feeling about this.

Josephine had been vocal about her objections to Michael's relationship with me. She was undoubtedly here to pursue her agenda of destroying our relationship.

She must be getting anxious now that our wedding is near.

Regardless of how unsettled I felt at her appearance, I forced myself to approach the open car window and greet her politely. "Hello, Mrs. Shaw."

I had never treated Josephine with anything less than respect, yet despite my best efforts, her icy demeanor toward me never thawed.

Josephine glanced at me coolly before shifting her gaze to stare ahead. "Ms. Garcia, I'd like to speak with you about some matters. Shall we have our conversation here or do you think we should talk somewhere else?"

She said all this somewhat casually, yet I felt chills down my spine.

It was not difficult to guess the purpose of this conversation, even if I did not have the specifics.

Common courtesy demanded that I invite Josephine to my house. However, the thought of being cooped up in the house alone with Josephine stressed me out.

I looked at my surroundings; to my relief, I spied a café in the distance.

"Mrs. Shaw, we can try the café over there. They've just opened recently and I've heard good reviews about their menu."

The café alleviated my fears about being alone with Josephine. I thought a public space would help to reduce some of the tension between us. Like it or not, once Michael and I were married, she would be my mother-in-law, and I did not wish to have a poor relationship with her.

Josephine followed my gaze, and I saw surprise flitting through her eyes. She's probably shocked that I suggested a café instead of my place. I guess now I know that she's got some pretty choice words for our conversation.

"Drive," she ordered her driver instead of replying to me and rolled up the window soon after.

I sighed in resignation as I watched the luxury sedan driving toward the café. What is she going to say this time?

Nothing she could say would make me leave Michael. That did not mean that I desired Josephine's blessing any less. No one wants to enter their marriage on the wrong foot with the husband's mother.

By the time I got to the café, Josephine was already waiting at a table. I took a deep breath to steel myself before taking a seat opposite her.

"Mrs. Shaw, would you like something to drink?" I asked nervously at the sight of her stoic expression.

She spared the briefest of glances for me before saying, "You know this place best. You can order a drink for me."

On the surface, Josephine's words seemed like an olive branch of sorts, yet the only thing they did was to deepen my sense of unease. I did not know her preferences and I worried that picking the wrong drink would worsen her already poor impression of me.

"A cup of Blue Mountain coffee, please."

I stopped a waiter walking behind me and placed an order. Josephine's expression did not do anything to soothe my nerves.

My ignorance about her taste and coffee in general put me in a dilemma. In the end, I ordered the Blue Mountain coffee because of its exorbitant price tag. Even if she doesn't like it, I don't think she would scoff at its prestige.

Thankfully, the waiter arrived with the coffee quickly. Josephine had remained silent the whole time. I followed suit, unsure of what to say to break the silence.

She used a teaspoon to gently stir the coffee before raising the cup to her nose to capture its fragrance.

I fretted at Josephine's display because I was concerned that she would find my choice lacking.

She eyed me once more and took a sip of the coffee. Her brows scrunched slightly, sending alarm bells going off in my head.

"Ms. Garcia, what do you think of their Blue Mountain coffee? Is it nice?" Josephine placed the cup on the table, staring at me with the ghost of a smile on her face. If I did not know any better, I would have believed that she was here to have a serious discussion with me about coffee.

I knew little about coffee and I struggled to come up with an answer to her question. Meanwhile, Josephine looked completely unruffled as she patiently awaited my reply.

“I think it’s quite nice. It has a rich and fragrant aroma.”

Frankly, I had only tried Blue Mountain coffee once in my life and I thought all coffees tasted pretty similar.

Coffee appreciation had always seemed like an expensive hobby to me. Besides, I preferred tea over coffee any day.

“Contrary to popular belief, Blue Mountain coffee isn’t the best coffee. The water used to brew this coffee is a disgrace; they should be using distilled water. The minerals in the water have distorted the taste of the coffee. I find it quite unpleasant.”

Josephine’s nonchalance as she delivered her criticism only amplified my shock. I could not comprehend how she could derive so much information from a mere sip of her coffee.

I could barely begin to tell the difference between good and bad coffee. While Josephine’s knowledge impressed me, I could not help but feel like I had failed a test of sorts.

“Mrs. Shaw, that is amazing. You could tell so much about the coffee from just one sip.”

My plan to remain silent failed under her steely gaze. I smiled weakly at her and voiced my admiration somewhat unnaturally to break the ice.

“This is basic knowledge for anyone who appreciates coffee. Ms. Garcia, are you truly ignorant of this?” Josephine’s humility was a thinly-veiled jab at my poor roots.

Soon enough, the telltale sneer appeared in her gaze. I knew she had used this coffee incident to insult me.

I was furious, but on account of her status as Michael’s mother, I could only swallow my feelings of injustice.

Josephine’s “test” filled me with a fresh wave of shame. Tasting the great coffees of the world was always a hobby for the rich. A village girl like me would not have had the time or means to enjoy such a luxurious activity.

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Chapter 289 The Power Of Love

I lowered my head and fell silent. Josephine's motive was now clear as day: she merely wanted to remind me of my inferiority compared to their family.

"This is but one example of the differences between you and Michael. You come from different worlds and naturally possess different tastes. Even if you get married, you'll struggle to cope with each other's lifestyle habits. Michael has never had to worry about putting food on the table for a day in his life while you're used to your rural ways. Your marriage is doomed from the start."

I remained silent. Her deceptively calm tone worsened instead of soothing the sting of her words.

I would be blind not to notice the stark difference between our lifestyles. Still, I believed that love transcended all borders in class and status.

Josephine may have succeeded in humiliating me and reminding me of the differences in our social standing, but that did not mean she had convinced me to give up on my relationship with Michael.

"With all due respect, Mrs. Shaw, Michael and I may occasionally run into such problems in the future, but I'm confident that our love for one another will trump these differences," I delivered my line earnestly and met Josephine's gaze.

I had made my stance clear; I would never leave Michael, no matter what Josephine said. I love him, and I want to spend the rest of my life with him.

She fumed at my determination. Her angry stare seemed to have lasted an eternity before she eventually said, "Ms. Garcia, are you telling me that you won't leave Michael?"

Josephine had dropped all pretense of acting civil toward me. Evidently, my obstinance was driving her mad and she had no qualms about baring her claws now.

I was surprised at how quickly her attitude soured. Still, I was not about to give in. I nodded my head and said, "Yes. I'm going to be with Michael

regardless of what anyone else thinks. The only person who can convince me to leave him is himself.”

Being with Michael meant putting up with both the good times and the bad. I swore to myself that I would never leave him unless he initiated the breakup himself.

Josephine’s rage intensified. I could tell that her patience with me had run dry.

“Ms. Garcia, I was going to spare you your dignity, but it looks like I was overly concerned for your wellbeing.”

Her tone seemed to have chilled several degrees.

I scrunched my brows in confusion. My gut instinct told me that things were about to take a turn for the worse.

Josephine rummaged in her purse that was sitting on the chair beside her. A couple of seconds later, she pulled out some photos and tossed them on the table between us.

The photos were of Justin and me at a café two days ago. One of them was a replica of the photo Michael had received.

I was dumbfounded and turned to look at Josephine. Why does she have so many photos?

“Ms. Garcia, you must be familiar with these photos. The man in these photos is your ex-boyfriend, Justin Xenakis.”

Josephine must have taken my shock as a sign of guilt. So eager was she to manufacture an illicit relationship between Justin and me.

I immediately explained, “Mrs. Shaw, you must be mistaken. Justin and I haven’t been in a relationship for ages and we will never be involved with one another again.”

I did not want Josephine’s impression of me to sink even further thanks to a misunderstanding.

“You’re not involved? Then how did these photos come about? Ms. Garcia, it seems like you have many enemies. This morning, I received an anonymous e-mail containing these very photos.”

Josephine stubbornly refused to believe my explanation. She’s probably already made up her mind about my relationship with Justin.

“Mrs. Shaw, things are not what you imagine. I’m no longer involved with Justin. Michael investigated his matter himself and he traced the photos back to Emma.”

I suddenly recalled Michael telling me that Emma had a hand in Justin contacting me out of the blue. Hopefully, she believes me now.

Instead of being convinced, Josephine was infuriated at my audacity to pin the blame on Emma.

“Ms. Garcia, you’re shrewder than I thought. How could you push the blame onto Emma at such a time? If it weren’t for you, Emma would’ve been my daughter-in-law a long time ago!”

She had never forgiven me for ruining Michael’s wedding. She has never wanted anyone other than Emma to be her daughter-in-law; I was never in the running. She’s probably still hoping for them to reconcile. My marriage with Michael is throwing a wrench in her plans.

I felt increasingly dejected at Josephine’s stubborn desire to make Emma her daughter-in-law. Still, I bit my tongue and made a last-ditch attempt to appeal to her acceptance.

“Everything I’ve said is the truth, Mrs. Shaw. If you don’t believe me, you can talk to Michael or run your own investigation. You’ll see that I have no need to lie to you. I’m innocent.”

I was a bit hesitant about throwing out that line about running an investigation, but I did not think it would be too difficult given Josephine’s ample resources.

Alas, she was too fixated on the idea of welcoming her precious Emma into the family. She was never going to blame Emma for her involvement in the first place.

“I don’t need to investigate this matter. So what if Emma’s involved? It doesn’t cancel out the fact that these photos are real. What makes you think I’ll believe your show of innocence?”

Ah, so she knew that Emma was behind this. She’s not above playing dirty tricks to force me to leave Michael.

“Mrs. Shaw, I don’t need your trust. I’m satisfied as long as Michael believes me.”

Josephine’s earlier words had been the final nail in the coffin. I now understood that nothing I said would change her mind. She was never

going to look at these photos objectively in the first place and that everything was a ploy to paint me as a cheater.

Frankly, I found her behavior disdainful. I would have upped and left if she was not Michael's mom.

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Chapter 290 Meals Made With Love

"Y-You!" Josephine sputtered with anger, now offended at my indifference about the photographs.

"Mrs. Shaw, if you're here to convince me to leave Michael, I'm sorry, but I can't concede to your request. Nothing you do or say can force me to change my mind!" I declared firmly and calmly, undeterred by her rage.

Being together with Michael was the only silver lining in my life right now. I would not allow anyone to take my happiness away from me.

"Anna Garcia, I'm Michael's mother. What do you think he'll say about your rude attitude?"

Josephine had regained her composure at an astonishingly fast speed, though rage still burned in her eyes.

"It's exactly because you're his mother that I've been putting up with your antics, but you've never once shown me the respect I deserve."

I've wasted too much time trying to convince her to accept me. How can she sacrifice Michael's happiness to further her interests?

"Respect? I refuse to respect a gold-digger! If you knew your place, you should have left Michael a long time ago!"

Gone was Josephine's calm facade as she glared at me disdainfully.

I inhaled deeply to suppress my rage. Her words and her assumptions were nothing short of offensive. Is that what she truly thinks of me? A gold-digger?

I wondered if the members of high society viewed everyone around them through a materialistic lens. Is one's self-worth truly defined by his or her class? Do the poor have no right to pursue their happiness?

"Mrs. Shaw, I've always been patient and civil to you for Michael's sake. My only wish was for you to return my respect. I may come from the village, but my pride is as valuable to me as the next person. I won't allow you to trample over it."

Her status as Michael's mother did not give her the right to insult and humiliate me as and when she pleased. Enough was enough.

Josephine looked like she had more to say, though I did not wish to subject myself to further humiliation.

I stared at her and hesitated for the briefest of moments before I stood up. Bowing slightly to her, I turned and took my leave.

Her stubbornness left no room for reasonable discussion. I'm not going to listen to anything else she has to say. Either way, I'm not leaving Michael.

I could feel her glare on my back as I left the café. To her credit, she did not stop me. Perhaps she realized the futility of bullying me into leaving Michael.

After leaving the café, I sighed deeply before heading to the supermarket.

The encounter with Josephine had doused any excitement I felt at preparing dinner for Michael.

I splurged on ingredients in the supermarket, yet my mood only worsened with time.

Michael came home that night looking fatigued. Our wedding was less than a week away and he had been busy handling the final details of the big day.

His dedication to planning our wedding touched me. Though his previous wedding to Emma had been a much grander affair, he barely showed any interest in planning it and had instead allowed Josephine to organize the wedding as she pleased. I was elated at his hands-on involvement in our big day.

Michael's actions spoke volumes about the difference in his feelings toward Emma and me. I was confident and thankful for his love.

When he came in, I hurried to him and retrieved his briefcase. I helped him remove his blazer after that.

Michael felt uncomfortable wearing his blazer at home. It was a habit of his that I had observed during our relationship.

"You look exhausted." I could not help but express my concern.

"I'm fine. Things are just a bit hectic lately because the wedding is happening so soon." Michael lifted his head and smiled at me reassuringly.

Soon, he turned his head toward the dining table, enticed by the aroma of a home-cooked meal.

"You've been planning the whole wedding yourself. I feel sorry that I haven't been able to help with anything."

I felt guilty about spending my days at home, helplessly waiting for Michael to return while he bustled about managing our affairs. I regretted being unable to offer him any help during this time.

"Don't be. You should focus on taking care of yourself and the baby." Michael tapped my nose fondly, which immediately soothed my concern.

I shuddered at his affectionate gesture. I loved it when he treated me this way; it kept the romance alive.

"I prepared your favorite dishes for dinner. You should try them and let me know how they taste. I haven't cooked in a long time."

Michael had not had my cooking since our breakup. I fretted incessantly in the kitchen earlier, worried that my cooking would ruin his appetite.

"Someone's in a great mood. You haven't cooked for me in ages." I was gratified that Michael seemed pleased at my initiative.

"Of course, I'd love to cook for you, but I'm never allowed in the kitchen because the housekeeper's always around."

Michael made it sound like I had not cooked in eons when, in truth, the housekeeper had kept me out of the kitchen to prevent me from overexerting myself. With her preparing all our daily meals, I could barely even make a piece of toast.

"Is this your way of telling me that you would like to cook more often? I have no objections to that, by the way. You can become my personal chef from now on," he teased and arched a brow.

I knew he was pulling my leg but his taunting expression still raised my hackles.

“No, thank you. Just let me know if you’re in the mood for my cooking. It’s a hard pass on being your personal chef.”

I planned to head back to work after our wedding. I need to make a living and support my baby. I’ve got no time to worry over his meals.

My refusal was well within his expectations. Instead of feeling upset, he merely picked up his fork and started eating.

I was suddenly reminded of my encounter with Josephine as I stared at the dishes on the table. My mood soured immediately.