

Love from My Dominant Boss

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That woman broke into a smile as soon as she saw the cash in my hand. She took the money and began to button up her clothes.

“Steven, I’ll take my leave first. Feel free to contact me if you need my service again.” Then, she blew a kiss at Steven before leaving.

“Hey! Wait a minute! We’re not done yet!” Steven stood up and called out to her.

However, she ignored him since she had taken my money.

After that woman left, Steven and I were the only people left in the living room. I was extremely angry with Steven after what had happened just now.

“I’ll give you one last chance. I hope that you can take your job seriously from now on. Stop fooling around. If this is how you handle your work, you should just quit,” I said after taking a deep breath. My expression was icy cold.

I could not accept the fact that Steven had slept with random women. Although he was only my brother, I sincerely hoped that he could become a responsible man.

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“Anna, aren’t you being too controlling? I’m your brother, not your husband!” Steven stared back at me. His eyes were blazing with fuming anger.

However, I was not bothered by that at all. Steven was an employee at Joyful Success at the moment, so I had the responsibility to make sure that he would give his best to his job.

“Stop your nonsense, Steven. Tidy yourself up right now and get back to work!” I ordered while pointing at the door.

I believed that I could turn him into a responsible, hardworking man.

“I’m not going! I’m just a security guard, after all. There won’t be much difference even if I’m not there.” Steven was not bothered by my words. He lay back on the couch without looking at me.

“Just a security guard? What else do you think you can do? If we give you a position as the CEO of Joyful Success, will you be able to manage the company well?”

I knew that Steven was not satisfied with the position Michael gave him. However, he could not even handle his current job well. That was why he did not deserve better jobs in the company.

He’s always that irresponsible when it comes to dealing with work. What right does he have to request better jobs from Michael? Besides, Michael doesn’t owe him anything.

“Anna, are you looking down on me? I’m your brother, and my brother-in-law is the CEO of a big company. Michael finally offered me a job after so long. However, he ended up giving me a position as a security guard. Do you know that everyone is making fun of me because of that?” Suddenly, Steven stood up upon hearing my words.

“Michael had said everything clearly before. As long as you do your job well, he’ll give you a promotion. But then, look at yourself now. You’ve skipped work to fool around with some random woman at home. Why would anyone give an important role to someone like you?”

I got even angrier upon hearing Steven’s protest. He’s overambitious. How dare he asks for a better position when he can’t even fulfill his duty as a security guard?

“I’m not asking for much. Is it hard for you guys to give me a better position like a department manager? Michael is the CEO of the company. He can surely do that if he wants to. Anna, don’t you think that you’ll get humiliated if the outsiders know that your brother is working as a security guard in your husband’s company?”

“I won’t be bothered by that. After all, I’m well aware of your capabilities. You know what? I think the company has wasted a position by giving you a role. If you insist on behaving like this, you should go home now.” I stood up after letting him have a piece of my mind.

Then, I turned around and walked toward the door.

Steven did not try to stop me. He stood still in the living room with a grim expression.

Suddenly, I recalled something important before leaving. I turned around and said, “I understand that you have your desires, but you’re old enough to get a girlfriend now. Regardless, I hope that you can stay away from those indecent women.”

After saying that, I opened the door and left.

I said that because I did not wish to see him date any promiscuous woman. Besides, he had reached the age to settle down and start a family. I hope he'll find a good woman. He'll definitely be more responsible once he starts building a family.

I could not stop thinking about Steven's problem along the way home. I was feeling a little frustrated, as Steven would never take my words seriously no matter what I said. When will he understand my intentions? When will he stop making me worry?

Michael was sitting in the living room when I got home. I was shocked to see him because it was not the time for him to be home yet. I froze for a moment before approaching him with a smile.

"Why did you get off work so early today?" I wrapped my arms around him as I leaned my head on his shoulder. Being close to him whenever he returned from work was enjoyable.

"Where have you been?" A slight smile appeared on Michael's face.

"I... I went to visit Steven." Initially, I wanted to hide everything from him. However, I felt that I should tell Michael the truth since Steven was currently working in his company.

Hearing that, Michael frowned as a flash of complex emotions appeared in his eyes.

"What's wrong? Why aren't you saying anything?" I frowned in confusion upon seeing his reaction.

After a moment of silence, he turned around and looked at me solemnly. "Are you unsatisfied with the job I gave to Steven?"

His voice was impassive. I could not tell what was on his mind, and I did not understand his intention of saying that.

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"In my opinion, I think you're already overestimating Steven by giving him a position as a security guard in Joyful Success. Judging by his personality and ability, I know you don't even want to hire him as a cleaner. That is why I think you're already showing a lot of compassion by giving him that position."

No one knew Steven better than me. Knowing Michael's personality, he was already kind enough to let such a parasite work in the company.

Michael's expression didn't change drastically, as if he had already expected such a reply from me. Just when I thought he wouldn't dwell on the topic anymore, he suddenly said, "Ever since Steven started working here, he had been bullying other employees by using his connection with me. What do you think? How should I solve this?"

Michael's sudden question caught me completely off guard. Never would I expect Steven to dare to pick on other people in the company. To make it worse, he even used Michael's name to do so.

Michael said all those somewhat casually, yet I could feel that he was on the verge of losing his patience with Steven.

Thus, I lowered my head in guilt, not having the courage to meet his gaze.

"I'm sorry that Steven's employment has caused you so much trouble."

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I should have known better than to let that troublemaker get hired into the company. This isn't good. I should have rejected Mom when she asked Michael to arrange a job for Steven in the company.

"This has nothing to do with you. I'm telling you this because I don't want you to misunderstand if I punish Steven later," he explained gently.

As he said so, he brushed my hair with his slender fingers lightly. His eyes shone with affection when he looked at me.

Upon meeting his dark eyes, I felt myself falling into his deep gaze. All my foul mood dissipated at once.

"I know that you're a fair person when it comes to work-related matters. So, I won't say anything regardless of how you plan to deal with Steven. After all, he's the one at fault."

Previously, when I worked in Joyful Success, Michael would put on a cold expression whenever I failed to complete a task. Now that Steven had done something wrong, there was no excuse for him to escape punishment.

I knew that Michael wouldn't punish Steven harshly for my sake. However, it was necessary to teach Steven a lesson. After all, it wouldn't be good for Michael's reputation if Steven kept getting full of himself in the company by using his name.

After hearing my response, Michael said nothing and flashed me a smile. Seeing that, I knew that my words had eased his self-conflict.

"Michael, thank you for everything you've done for me. You could have refused to hire Steven back then, but why didn't you?"

I felt touched by his kindness as I leaned my head against his shoulder.

He surprised me when he calmly said, "I know that you want Steven to change and become a better person."

At that, I quickly regarded him in disbelief. That's what my heart truly desires. I can't believe he knows!

I seldom mentioned my family in front of him all this while, as I knew they had only ever given him headaches. Therefore, I had never told him how much I wanted Steven to change.

"You know my thoughts?"

I stared dumbly at Michael. Only after a while did I snap out of my daze and ask.

"You're my woman, so how can I not know? However, have you heard of the saying, a leopard can't change its spots? You should be ready that your wish could be unfulfilled in the end."

His voice was deep and beguiling while he hugged me tightly.

So, he knows my thoughts but doesn't think they can be achieved. He doubts that Steve can change. Upon hearing his words, I couldn't help but feel disappointed. After all, Michael had always had an accurate intuition when he judged a person.

In the end, I sighed and didn't say anything anymore. Anyway, I've given Steven a chance. Let's hope that he won't disappoint me again.

After dinner and a love-making session on the bed, Michael went to the study to continue dealing with his work. Only after did I realize that he was back early that day because he missed me, not because he had finished his work. That realization made my heart flutter uncontrollably.

Even though I felt extremely exhausted and drained every single time after an intimate session, I felt blissful at the same time, as I knew he would want to do it only because he liked me.

Contrarily, if he had no feelings for me at all, he wouldn't even bother to spare me a glance.

I was resting alone in the room after Michael went to the study. The moment I thought of how he treated me now, a smile crawled onto my face as happiness filled my heart.

In the following days, life went on peacefully as everything returned to the way they were supposed to be. Emma was sentenced to five years in prison for

kidnapping me. Meanwhile, the company that belonged to the Jones family had to announce bankruptcy under Michael's heavy pressure.

As time passed, my baby bump finally became visible. At the thought of how our child was growing in my belly, I couldn't help but anticipate the day I got to see the baby's face.

During this period, Michael had finished dealing with almost all his work in the company. He promised to give me another wedding to make me the happiest woman in the world, and I believed whatever he said.

As long as he stayed by my side, I would be the most blessed woman in the world. After all, he was the best thing that had ever happened to me.

It was a Monday when Michael urged me to get up from bed early in the morning. Surprisingly, he didn't go to the company as usual.

What has gotten into him today? He had never disturbed my rest before.

As I got eaten up by curiosity, I opened my eyes hazily to find him finished dressing up. My heart trembled at the sight of his handsome face that was inches from mine.

"It's already late. Shouldn't you go to work now?"

I tried my best to keep my eyes open, yet there was still a hint of exhaustion in my voice. Ever since I got pregnant, I would get sleepy easily and spend most of my time in my dreams.

"We need to do something important today. Quick. Get out of bed and freshen up."

Michael then curved his lips into a mysterious smile and stood up without explaining further.

Seeing that, I furrowed my brows in puzzlement. What? What is this mysterious important thing? And why do I need to go as well? How weird!

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Despite that, I still did as he said. Now that Michael had become much more daring after I got through the first three months of pregnancy safely, he would have his way with me once almost every night. At some point, I even started to suspect if his body was made out of steel.

It was truly unbelievable how he could still look so energetic in the morning after going at it until midnight every day. On the other hand, I looked wrecked and tired whenever I woke up.

After washing up, I headed to the living room. There, Michael had long waiting for me. My eyes flickered at the rare sight of him in a completely grey casual outfit. Instead of looking cold and collected like he always did in his usual black and white suit, he appeared gentler and more approachable that moment.

“So, what is it? Why are you so secretive?”

I came over to his side and looked at him in utter curiosity. Hmm, he looks exceptionally handsome today!

“It’s a secret. You’ll know when we get there.”

Michael just curved his lips and gave me a seductive smile. In the next second, he strode toward me, held my hand, and interlocked our fingers together, causing my heart to involuntarily skip a beat.

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The car moved toward a destination I was clueless about at a steady but quick pace. Despite that, I remained silent the entire journey, as I knew he wouldn’t tell me even if I asked him.

Approximately half an hour later, he finally stopped the car. As I took in our surroundings, I was even more confused upon realizing that we were on an unfamiliar street.

Out of curiosity, I swiveled my head around to look at him and asked, “Where are we? Why are we here?”

“Take a look at your left.”

Instead of revealing the answer directly, he raised his brows before smiling again.

Following his gaze, a building with two large words instantly came into my sight: City Hall. My heart started to pound wildly.

Could it be that...

“We’re here to get our marriage certificate?”

I shifted my gaze back to Michael a moment later, looking a bit unsure as I wondered whether I had guessed it wrongly.

Even though we had a wedding ceremony, I didn’t want to assume anything as he hadn’t mentioned getting the marriage certificate at all. After all, it was a

common practice among the wealthy to prevent their wife from sharing their family possessions after a divorce.

Previously, I would still feel bothered by that. However, the more I thought of it, the more I realized that I should be grateful for Michael's willingness to give me a wedding.

I had never hoped for him to agree to get a marriage certificate with me because I knew it was a wishful thought. Yet, it would be a lie to say I wasn't excited when he suddenly brought me here.

"What else can we do in City Hall if it isn't to register our marriage?"

Upon taking in my shocked expression, a grin crawled onto his face, and adoration filled his dark eyes.

Once again, my heart trembled at his firm reply. As I gazed at his smiling face, I opened my mouth, trying to say something but found myself at a loss for words. In reality, I could barely conceal my excitement at that point.

It took me a while before I could finally compose myself and look into his eyes. In the next second, I threw myself into his embrace emotionally.

I was already touched by what he did for me before, yet it was at that very moment when he took me here that I truly felt his sincerity.

Soon after, Michael patted my shoulder and urged gently, "It's getting late. Let's go in."

Only then did I snap out of my senses. By the time I wiggled out of Michael's arms, my eyes were already shining with unshed tears.

Women were always so emotional, so of course, I was no exception. I guessed all women would feel the same happiness when they could marry their beloved officially.

Just as I planned to open the door to get out of the car with Michael, I halted in my action when something suddenly came to my mind.

Seeing that, Michael sat back before giving me a curious look. "What's wrong?"

His voice was calm but gentle.

"I didn't bring my ID card and household registry, so we can't get the certificate today."

With that said, I lowered my head in utter disappointment. How can I not bring those? He specifically brought me here today, yet how can I waste his effort? Who knows when he would recall this again if we missed the chance today?

Michael couldn't help but chuckle when he saw me sulking. In the next instant, he brushed my nose lovingly and said gently, "Rest assured. I've brought along your ID card and household registry. I plan to get the certificate with you today, so of course, I had prepared everything beforehand."

To my astonishment, my ID card and household registry appeared magically in his hands in the next moment.

I could no longer hold myself back at the sight of my ID card and household registry. My heart skipped a beat as the realization dawned on me. He'd prepared everything.

Instantly, my mood was elevated. An unprecedented excitement surged in me as I took my ID card and household registry.

Michael then said with an affectionate smile, "We better head in before the staff gets off work."

Thus, both of us went into City Hall together. At first, I thought we had to spend a long time waiting for our turns, but apparently, time was money for him. The moment we stepped into the building, someone welcomed us instantly and led us in, saving us from the fate of queueing up.

My heart was pounding the entire time when the staff stamped the certificate after we signed it. By the time he handed us the certificate respectfully, I was still doubting myself, thinking that everything that happened that day was a dream.

Did I marry Michael for real? How can this be? I must be dreaming! Yes, it has to be a dream!

I couldn't snap myself out of my daze for quite some time as I clasped the marriage certificate tightly in my hands. I didn't even realize that we had arrived home.

Michael then parked the car and leaned closer to me. His eyes traced my line of sight before falling on the certificate as well. With a smile, he asked, "Are you done staring? What is so interesting about the marriage certificate that you have to glue your eyes on it throughout the journey?"

I must have looked very disoriented in his eyes at that moment, and he couldn't help but chuckle.

Only when his voice rang in my ears did I come to my senses. I jolted awake and turned my head, only to meet his dark eyes instantly.

"Well, can't I bask in the excitement for a while?"

His tease made me blush in embarrassment. Indeed, it was merely a marriage certificate that every married couple would own, but I just couldn't help grinning like a dummy when I finally got one.

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"Of course! You can stare at it as long as you want once we get home." Michael's grin grew wider as he razzed me.

Gazing into his eyes, I instantly knew that he was teasing me. It was embarrassing, but the moment I recalled the fact that we had gotten ourselves the marriage certificate, I found myself not minding the teasing at all.

"Enough. Let's go in."

When he saw me rolling my eyes, he decided to shut his mouth and said no more. Yet, the sly grin on his face never left.

As soon as we entered the living room, we were greeted by the sight of Josephine sitting on the couch with a grim expression.

For some reason, the moment her eyes fell on the certificate in my hands, I panicked, knowing that she wouldn't be fond of finding out what we did a few moments ago. After all, for her, I was with Michael for his fortune all this time.

Josephine then shifted her gaze to my face and asked coldly, "What are you holding?"

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My heart raced at her question. Out of reflex, I hid the marriage certificate behind my back, not wanting her to see it. Unfortunately, my attempt was to no avail, and instead, it had successfully angered her.

"What is it? Take it out, now!"

Her eyes were boiling with rage at that moment.

"I..."

I was hesitant to obey her instruction, knowing that she would be more dissatisfied with me if she knew about the truth.

Noticing that I was taking a long time hesitating, her temper rose. She rose to her feet abruptly and snapped, "Don't you have any respect for your elders? Didn't you hear me? Show me now!"

Hearing that, Michael frowned and decided to interrupt with a tinge of fury in his tone, "Mom, enough! Anna's pregnant. Why are you yelling at her?"

Josephine was taken aback, never expecting Michael to stand up for me at such a moment. When she regained her senses, she glared at him.

"Michael, is this how you should speak to me? All because of this woman, you are now arguing with me almost every day. Do you still see me as your mother? Could it be that she is more important than me in your heart?"

Whenever Michael took my side, Josephine would grow angrier, and in the end, despise me further. I had discussed this topic with Michael multiple times before, yet he would always brush it off and ignore me, even telling me that no one could bully me in front of him.

"Mom, if you want me to be nice to you, you should rectify your way of treating Anna first. She's my woman, not a servant in our house."

Michael remained unfazed and kept looking at Josephine coldly. Being as assertive as Michael, no one could threaten him.

"You're getting more headstrong by the day! Are you sure that you want to keep defying me for this woman? I'm your mother!"

She got even more worked up as she went on. By the time she finished her remarks, she instantly turned toward me and stared daggers at me. At that, I couldn't help but fidget in nervousness.

Before Michael could say something, I signaled for him to stop by pulling his hand. I knew that he was trying to protect me, but the more he spoke up for me, the more hatred Josephine would have for me.

"Mom, I didn't mean to hide it from you. It's just that I haven't thought of a proper way to tell you about it."

After taking two steps forward, I stopped in front of her. I decided to call her "Mom" after hesitating for a while, as Michael and I were legally married now.

Josephine frowned upon hearing how I addressed her. Her gaze radiated disgust as she looked at me.

"I have told you before that I'll never acknowledge you as my daughter-in-law, so don't call me that!"

It would be a lie to say I wasn't upset nor livid at her contemptuous remarks. However, I chose to suppress my anger, not wanting to cause any more arguments.

"I know you don't like me, but we had gotten our marriage certificate. Now that we're a legally married couple, there's nothing wrong with me calling you that. In fact, it's the way it should be."

I stared into her eyes and enunciated every single word calmly.

"What? You've registered your marriage?"

At the mention of the certificate, Josephine widened her eyes in disbelief. As expected, anger and shock instantly flashed across her eyes.

I decided to confess to her despite foreseeing the outcome. After all, sooner or later, she would find out the truth.

Thus, I showed her the certificate and looked at her expressionlessly. Regardless of how she was displeased with our marriage, she had no choice but to accept it then. I would be her daughter-in-law by law unless she chose to disown her son.

She snatched it over hurriedly and started examining it thoroughly. Nonetheless, she could immediately tell with a glance that it was real.

"Anna Garcia, what did you do to get Michael to agree to this? What do you want from us?"

Josephine held on tight to the marriage certificate while spitting out her words. Her face twisted with anger as she glared at me viciously.

Her harsh questions made me frown uncomfortably. Indeed, anyone would feel insulted when someone spoke ill of themselves. Not to mention all those words were also unpleasant and awful.

Hence, I replied calmly, "Mom, I want to be with Michael sincerely, so I hope you can give us your blessing. Furthermore, don't you realize that the more you target me, the more likely Michael would quarrel with you?"

Her anger swelled further at my remarks. She then pointed her trembling finger at me and barked, "Are you threatening me?"

"Mom, you've misunderstood. I've no intention to do so, as I only want you to stop targeting me. From now on, I am Michael's legal wife, and it won't change unless he divorces me. Thus, I hope that we can get along well. Otherwise, it will only put Michael in a tight spot."

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Furrowing my eyebrows, I felt aggrieved after being misunderstood by Josephine. However, I was more inclined to set things right with her than get mad. After all, even though Michael never complained and always stood by my side, Josephine was still his mother. Therefore, it would pain him to denounce his mother continuously.

I did not want Michael to be sandwiched in the middle between Josephine and me due to our issue.

“Do you think I will accept you by doing this? Let me tell you that no matter what you do or say, I will never acknowledge you as my daughter-in-law. Besides, Michael is my son. I don’t believe that he would go against me forever!” While saying that, Josephine looked toward his son, trying to see if there were any signs of wavering.

However, Michael’s face remained indifferent and showed no intention of stopping me. Thus, Josephine was even angrier after seeing how he supported me.

“All right, then! It looks like the both of you don’t respect me since you’re ganging up on me like this—especially you, Michael. I’m so disappointed in you. How could you treat me this way for a mere woman?” Josephine spat out furiously while pointing at Michael. Then, she stormed out of the house.

It seems like things will always go wrong whenever I meet with Mrs. Shaw. Upon thinking that, I felt frustrated. Although I tried my best to be the ideal daughter-in-law Josephine wanted, my family background was not something I could control. As I was born and raised in a village, there was no way I could provide any substantial benefit to the Shaw family.

Standing in the same spot, I hung my head in exasperation. At that moment, Michael came up to me and put his hand around my shoulders. “All right. Stop overthinking things. You don’t need to be bothered by my mom. It’s not like you’ll meet with her every day.” He spoke in a gentle tone.

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I knew that Michael was trying to comfort me. Thus, I looked up and flashed him a weak smile. However, I could not seem to get rid of the disappointment in my heart.

It was meant to be a joyous day to receive our marriage certificate, but it had all gone down the drain.

“Don’t worry. I’m fine. I believe that Mom will accept me one day, for I will try to live up to the expectation of the daughter-in-law she wants.”

In all honesty, I could ignore the way Josephine treated me just fine. I was married to Michael and not to his mother anyway. However, it pained me to see him frustrated over that.

Even though he did not show it, I could tell that he secretly minded over that issue. After all, no man in this world hoped to see their mom and wife on bad terms.

“Don’t be so hard on yourself.” Michael caressed my face and curled his lips into a thin smile, his eyes filled with gentleness.

As I knew how Michael doted on me, I could not stand by and watch him being in a bind. Thus, I hoped to get along with Josephine. A good relationship between mother and daughter-in-law was important, after all.

After sending me back to my room and comforting me for a while, Michael went back to the company to attend to some work. Meanwhile, I was lying in bed while thinking of various ways of making Josephine satisfied with me.

While being deep in thought, I somehow fell asleep. A phone call then woke me up. After seeing that it was from my mother, I did not feel anything in particular.

Evidently, she was calling to ask about Steven as it had been about a month since he stayed here. Although he constantly skipped work, he did not cause too much trouble at the very least.

“Mom,” I greeted after picking up the call.

“Anna, I can’t seem to reach Steven. I’m a bit worried.” Her voice sounded from the other end of the line. As expected, she was phoning to ask about Steven.

“Mom, don’t get too worried over it. Maybe his phone ran out of battery, or that he forgot to bring it with him.”

Mom always treated Steven as the apple of her eye and would call him several times a day. Seeing how worried she was over a missed call, I felt jealous. I really wish she could worry about me the same way she does for Steven.

“Since you don’t have anything important going on, why don’t you go and check on your brother? He might be in danger!”

Her voice once again boomed from the phone. However, I was displeased with her words. Isn’t she too much of a worrywart? Steven is a grown man—he can take care of himself. Why is she so worried over one missed call?

“Don’t worry. He’s definitely fine. You can try to phone him later on. I’m a bit tired today, so I want to get some rest.”

After getting pregnant, I felt more easily tired than usual. Thus, just the thought of visiting Steven made me feel exhausted.

“How can you be like this? I’m just asking you to check up on your younger brother, yet you rejected me right away. Do you perhaps not feel worried for your brother? What if something terrible happened?” Mom’s angry voice spewed out of the phone as soon as I dismissed her thought. It was expected, for she would usually let out her anger on me regarding Steven’s matters.

“I really don’t think it’s necessary to do so. Steven is a grown-up, not some three-year-old. What could happen to him? Like I said before, maybe his phone ran out of battery. Don’t be so anxious over it.” I then sighed in frustration. Why is she like this?

“I don’t care! Head to your brother’s place immediately. I can’t sleep without confirming that he’s all right. Do you hear me? Go there right now!” Initially, there was still room for discussion in my mother’s tone. However, it soon turned into an order.

As I furrowed my eyebrows, the irritation in my heart grew stronger and stronger. Despite wanting to reject her again, I knew she would only rebuke me with even harsher words. Therefore, I could only choose to compromise. “I understand. I’ll go there right now. Once I’m there, I’ll give you a call.”

After saying that, I hung up the phone before she could respond.

Sitting up, I rubbed my head in dismay. Although I was in a terrible mood, I could not break my promise.

After getting dressed, I hailed a taxi and headed to Steven’s place.

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Actually, Michael had specially prepared a car and a driver for me. If I wanted to use the service, the driver would arrive in less than ten minutes. However, I was unaccustomed to the living habits of high society. Thus, I felt more at ease to go about as I liked.

When I arrived at Steven’s house, I realized that his door had been left ajar, signifying that he was home.

As it was currently working hours, I felt displeased seeing that he was at home and not at work. Was the advice I gave him last time all for naught? He didn’t change at all!

When I walked inside, I was met with a pungent stench of alcohol. Immediately, I furrowed as I could not stand strong scents due to my pregnancy.

Walking into the living room, I saw a few men sitting on the floor with empty bottles of beer surrounding them.

With their dyed hair and freakish hairstyle, they seemed to be the usual hooligans that could be found on the streets, and Steven was sitting in the center of them.

“Let’s continue drinking until we get drunk!” A man with unnaturally red hair raised his beer bottle.

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“Quentin! Here’s a toast to you!” At that moment, Steven spoke to the man with red hair while raising his beer bottle groggily. By the respectful tone he had, it was evident that he was trying to butter him up.

“Okay! Cheers!” the man answered and gulped down the beer.

Steven quickly followed suit and chugged the beer down.

I locked my gaze on Steven angrily, unable to believe that he was drinking with hooligans.

Initially, I wanted to rush up to him immediately. However, I feared for my safety as the men did not appear decent. In the end, I decided against it and sent a message to Michael to ask him to pick me up.

“Steven, why is there a woman here? Who is she?” After I finished sending the text message, a yellow-haired man noticed me and sized me up lustfully.

When Steven noticed me, his expression turned serious, and he asked in a displeased tone, “Sis, why are you here?”

It was evident that he did not want me to be there.

“Steven, is this your sister? Your biological sister?” The yellow-haired man stood up and walked up to me unsteadily upon hearing that.

“Xavier...” Steven called with a hint of worry in his tone.

“I didn’t know that you have such a beautiful sister. She’s absolutely stunning! Does she have a boyfriend?” The man called Xavier had already walked up to me and was staring at my chest. By the looks of it, saliva was about to ooze out of his mouth any moment now.

Upon hearing that, Steven shot a worried look at me and walked toward me wobbly. “Xavier, she’s already married. Besides, her husband is—”

“So she’s already married? That’s such a shame! She’s still so young, too.” Although Xavier said that, he still tried to caress my face. Steven shot forward and shielded me as I was about to avoid the man’s touch.

“I don’t think this is appropriate. She’s already married, so don’t do anything stupid.” Steven tried to defend me, understanding Xavier’s intention toward me. As I could hear the worry in his voice, I knew that he was concerned for me. So he still has the conscience not to ignore me in this situation.

Then, Steven gestured for me to leave quickly behind his back. Although I was furious at him, I knew it was better for me to go in that situation. I would have to find another chance to teach him a lesson.

When I turned to leave, Xavier spoke up. “Don’t go! Since you’re Steven’s sister, you’re also our friend. How about you stay and drink with us?”

After that, Xavier yanked Steven aside and walked toward me.

At that moment, I was frozen at the same spot and could not even move.

“It’s okay. I still have some things to attend to, so I’ll be leaving,” I replied calmly and wanted to leave quickly. However, Xavier grabbed my arm and pulled me back in place.

Instantly, I was repulsed by his touch and pushed him away hard.

Hooligans like him were the people I looked down upon the most, so I hated being near him.

“Hey, Steven! It seems that your sister is a feisty one. Despite that, I like her. If you can let her accompany me for a night, I’ll allow you to join us. How about it?” Although Xavier was talking to Steven, he kept his gaze on me.

After hearing his arrogant words, my displeasure intensified as I wore a look of disgust while looking at him.

Steven was at a loss. “I don’t think this is a good idea. She’s my sister, after all. Besides, if my brother-in-law gets wind about this, he’ll kill me.”

At least Steven was not horrible enough to agree to his deal. If he did, I would be utterly disappointed in him.

“What are you worried about? If he comes and finds you, you have me! I’m the boss of this entire area, so he won’t dare to say anything.”

Although Steven helped me out, Xavier paid no heed and stretched out his hand again. Meanwhile, anger flooded my veins. How dare a hooligan like him insult me!

Once again, my brother hid me behind his back and begged, "Xavier, please let my sister go. She's extremely straightforward and definitely different from the usual woman you have encountered. She'll no doubt cause you anger!"

I could hear how scared Steven was while saying that. It might be because he was afraid that the man would deal with him instead.

"Who do you think you are? You should know that nobody has dared to stop me from getting the woman I wanted. Plus, I only allowed you to become one of my men because you're a fast learner. So if you dare to get in my way again, I won't go easy on you!"

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Chapter 337 Michael To The Rescue

Losing his patience, Xavier was smoldering with resentment as he glared at Steven.

"What a bunch of gangsters. Aren't you scared of the police locking all of you up?" After seeing how terrified Steven was of Xavier, anger stirred within me. Is Steven even a man? How could he not fight back when seeing others touching me? Why do I have such a useless brother?

"What did you just say? I dare you to repeat that!" The man with red hair shouted while walking over to me. He pointed a beer bottle at me, seemingly ready to hit me with it at any time.

Although I was scared, I was not as cowardly as my brother. Anyone could tell that those men were an insult to society, and I was not one to stand back and try to please them.

"I'm saying that you're a bunch of scoundrels! If I were you, I would leave right now. Otherwise, once my husband arrives, he won't let you off the hook so easily!" Albeit scared, I felt myself at ease when I was reminded of Michael.

After all, he would not forgive them if any of them dared to lay a hand on me. Besides, hooligans like them were a piece of cake for Michael to take care of.

"Anna! Can you stop talking to them? If you continue, you might be in trouble before Michael can get here!" Steven muttered while looking at me worriedly. As he spoke in a soft tone, his words were unheard by the others.

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After hearing Steven's words, I did not say anything else despite still being angry. After all, I could not confirm that Michael was on his way or if he had seen the message at all.

"You're saying that your husband won't forgive us? No one has ever had the guts to be so arrogant to me before. Since you're being so disobedient, I'll make sure you get a good punishment. How about this? You can be my woman from today onward, and I'll be your husband instead of him." Xavier burst out in laughter, thinking that I was just joking around.

"Anna, run! I'll hold them off." Knowing that they would not let me off easily, Steven looked like he was ready for death when he turned around and whispered.

When I heard that, my heart clenched tightly. I can't believe Steven just said that!

After all, Steven had always been a selfish person in my mind, and I always thought he would leave me to fend for myself in a dangerous situation. Thus, I did not expect him to protect me when the situation called for it.

Without answering him, I looked at Steven with mixed emotions. Although I knew it was best for me to run away at that moment, I could not leave my younger brother behind.

"What are you still waiting around for? Go!" Seeing that I was frozen in place, Steven could not help but urge me. Meanwhile, Xavier had already walked over and trapped me in his arms.

I furrowed deeply and felt my disgust for Xavier growing deeper. Although I tried hard to break free from his grasp, a woman's strength could not be compared to a man's. Consequently, I could not move and could only watch helplessly as he touched my face.

When Steven saw that, he steeled his heart and rushed up to us, pushing Xavier off of me.

Upon seeing that, the other men in the living room naturally sided with Xavier. Thus, they shoved Steven down onto the floor. At that moment, Steven's nose was already bleeding from the impact.

"Steven! Are you okay?"

After seeing how he did that to Xavier to protect me, I felt genuinely moved. I did not expect my younger brother would choose to save me in such a dangerous situation. It was also the first time I felt something other than anger toward him.

"Why didn't you run when I told you to?" Steven shouted while being pressed down, displeasure flickering in his eyes.

"You're my brother! How can I leave you behind?" No matter how displeased I was with him, he was still my brother. Therefore, there was no way I would run off without him.

At that moment, Xavier had walked over to me. Then, he stretched out his hand with a smile and remarked, "Since you don't want to leave, you should stay behind and accompany me. I last quite long in bed, just so you know."

When I saw the look in his eyes when he was ogling me, I resisted the urge to slap him.

As I was used to Michael's handsome looks, I felt disgusted looking at his ugly and fat face.

"Get lost! You'd better not touch me!" I warned while slapping his hand away. Although I knew I could not get away, it did not stop me from resisting.

"Hah! Feisty, aren't you? But it's fine since I like women like you. When we're in bed later, the feeling of conquering you will be sweet."

Rubbing his palms in anticipation, Xavier reached out to me. Meanwhile, I could not escape as I was cornered. When his hands were about to touch my breasts, the door was suddenly kicked open with a loud bang.

Everyone in the room was taken aback by the loud noise, immediately looking toward the direction of the door. When Michael appeared in the doorway, I heaved a sigh of relief. Michael's here! I'm saved.

"Michael!" The anxiety in my heart slowly faded upon seeing him, for I knew he would undoubtedly protect me.

"What is this?" When he saw me being cornered, he furrowed coldly.

However, when I wanted to answer him, Xavier walked over to Michael while glaring at him in vexation. "Who are you?"

Angered by Michael's interruption, Xavier had a questioning tone in his voice as he scowled.

"Her husband," Michael answered coldly while shooting him a look.

With his curt reply and cold tone, he clearly did not think highly of the hooligans.

After all, it was normal for someone as influential as Michael to look down on those thugs, not to mention his personality had always been so arrogant.

"So you're the husband she kept raving about? I don't think you can withstand one punch of mine with that skinny figure of yours! I'd advise you to leave right now. Or else, don't blame us for being merciless!" Xavier snorted, completely

disregarding Michael as a threat. Plus, he was convinced that the latter could never defeat that many people at once.

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“You guys have to pay the price for touching my wife!”

Michael clenched his fists as he exuded a murderous chill. He was a possessive person. Since gangsters were harassing his woman, he was undoubtedly enraged.

“You sure have guts, punk! Are you aware of who Xavier Woodwork is? How dare you speak to me like this? You must be tired of living!”

Michael was not even a tad bit afraid in front of those people, which infuriated Xavier. Thinking that people in the area feared his own name, Xavier was displeased by Michael’s nonchalance.

“Never heard of it.”

Michael’s cold gaze was locked on Xavier, who was walking toward him as the former said those words. Listening to what Michael said, Xavier’s body trembled in rage.

“You brat! It looks like you’re trying to mess with me. I’ll let you know what I am capable of! That way, you will learn your lesson not to mess with me anymore!”

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Once Xavier finished his sentence, Steven, who was being pressed on the ground, was let go by Xavier’s underlings. The men then walked toward the direction of Michael.

Although I had witnessed Michael’s capability previously, I was still worried about the injury on his arm. Even though he had rested for almost two weeks, he couldn’t have fully recovered from his injury.

“Do you guys have a death wish?”

There was a flame of fury roaring within Michael as he locked his gaze on the hooligans when he spoke with his low and cold voice. The next second, he gave the frontmost person a strong kick.

His kick was so powerful that it sent the person flying into the other hooligans behind, causing all of them to fall to the ground.

“You are a brave guy! How dare you make a move before I do!”

Seeing his underlings on the ground, Xavier was stunned for a second before he snapped back to his senses. He then glared at Michael. It was probably because he had never met someone as arrogant as Michael before.

Michael remained expressionless as he stared at the hooligans in front of him. I knew Michael was a person who wouldn't be afraid no matter what problems he encountered.

Ever since Michael saved me that time, my perception of him changed again. He looked cool when he fought for me, but I knew that this was not the time for admiring Michael as there were quite a few hooligans that he had to handle. If Michael was injured, I am the one who would be heartbroken.

Hiding behind his back, I whispered, “Michael, please be careful.”

I was a little heartbroken as my gaze shifted to his injured arm.

He wouldn't have been injured if he hadn't saved me previously. If he gets injured again this time, I will feel even more guilty.

“Go and hide at somewhere safe.”

Michael nodded as he spoke.

I knew if I stayed beside him, I would only be a burden to him. This situation made me recall the time when I was kidnapped. If I wasn't held as a hostage that time, Michael would've dealt with them easily.

I retreated to Steven's side obediently as I looked at Michael with a face full of worry.

“Anna, there are so many of them. Can Michael handle them by himself?”

At that moment, Steven put himself in front of me, a picture of concern.

Although Steven was much more mature that day, I was still infuriated as everything would not have happened if it wasn't for him.

“Don't you feel bad for saying that? You kept skipping work to hang out with this bunch of hooligans. Now that things turned out this way, it's all on you!”

Once I heard his remark, I was so mad at that moment as Michael had to fight with so many hooligans because of my unreliable brother. He only knows how to

create trouble for me. I really have no idea what else he is capable of doing. I really have the urge to give up on him now.

“Why are you blaming me again? If you didn’t come to my place so frequently, would any of this have happened? If you had not come, none of this would have happened.”

Steven looked at me with a face of indignant. He thought that it was me who caused this mess to happen and was not remorseful at all.

“If Mom didn’t tell me she couldn’t contact you and made me come to check on you, do you think I would be here right now? Listen to me, Steven. If anything happens to Michael today, I will never forgive you!”

I frowned from irritation as I glared at Steven. If Michael weren’t fighting with the hooligans, I would really teach Steven a lesson right then and there.

Seeing I might be infuriated, Steven pursed his lips and said no more.

However, my worry was unnecessary. The hooligans were unarmed and were no match against Michael. He subdued the hooligans easily without much effort.

Seeing his underlings beaten up by Michael one after another, Xavier was shocked with his eyes widened. “Who the hell are you? So incredible!”

He looked horrified as he gawked at Michael. The man knew that he had no chance to beat Michael once his underlings were down.

“Michael!”

Michael stood in front of him and glowered at him with a cold gaze.

“You... Are you Michael Shaw?”

Xavier trembled once he heard Michael’s name as if it was something unbelievable.

Judging from his reaction, he should have heard of Michael’s name. However, he would have never thought that Michael would appear in such an old and shabby house, and he even started a fight with Michael.

“What do you think?” Michael answered his question with another question as he stared at Xavier with his icy gaze.

“I-I...”

After confirming Michael’s identity, Xavier’s body trembled even more. He was even stuttering as he spoke.

I frowned in puzzlement and looked at Michael. Is his name that powerful? Why would Xavier be so scared after hearing his name?

“Get lost!” Michael demanded coldly without saying anything unnecessary.

Xavier’s attitude at that instant was different from his arrogant attitude previously. He was so afraid of Michael that he left the place instantly.

His underlings also followed him and left swiftly.

The room was only left with me, Steven and Michael. Michael only came to my side to check on me after those hooligans left the room.

“What happened? Why was there a bunch of hooligans here?” After scrutinizing me, Michael questioned with a worried expression.

Hence, I told him about my mom asking me to check on Steven. After I arrived, I saw Steven drinking with them, and they tried to harass me after they saw me.

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Chapter 339 Furious Michael

Michael’s expression darkened as he took in what had been said to him. His blazing gaze shifted to Steven in the blink of an eye.

“Did I let you stay here just to endanger your sister?” Michael’s voice was ice cold. As he approached Steven, the latter panicked when he sensed Michael’s presence emitting a powerful aura.

In his fear, Steven looked at me after glancing at Michael as he approached. After that, he glanced back toward Michael many times in a row.

“Michael, I’m sorry. It’s my fault. I didn’t mean to do it.” Steven gave Michael a cheeky grin as he stared at him. However, his uneasiness was still clearly visible on his face.

“You have no idea how much Anna has given up for your sake. Every day, you’ve been slacking off at work and not showing up to the office. Even more so now that you’ve started to offend these gangsters.”

Steven’s apologies did not go over well with Michael as the latter’s face remained expressionless. He was also aware that Steven’s repentance was not sincere.

"I'm truly sorry, Michael. I promise not to contact them again. Please forgive me just once. Not to mention, I just protected my sister from harm. You can ask her if you don't believe me."

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My advice to Steven was never taken to heart. He didn't act like that in front of Michael, though.

Yes, he did protect me earlier, but that couldn't erase the fact that he incited the gangsters in the first place.

"Tomorrow, these gangsters will be sent to jail. I was debating whether or not to send you over so that you might learn from your mistakes." Michael's fury dissipated almost immediately. As he talked, he looked into Steven's frenzied eyes. After hearing what Michael had to say, even I was in fear.

The instant Steven heard that he would be going to jail, he was terrified and knelt in front of Michael. "Michael, I've definitely learned my lesson. Please accept my apologies for this one time. In the future, I swear to arrive on time for work each and every day."

Although Steven was a jerk, he had a small amount of courage. When he heard he was going to jail, he was immediately terrified and kept promising to behave.

On the other hand, Michael was not as empathetic as I was. He wasn't persuaded in the least. His expression remained icy the entire time. Hearing Steven's apologies would have already convinced me if it were me.

Michael glanced at Steven coldly. He stepped right up to me, grabbed my hands, and marched out of the place before he could finish his sentence.

Riding in Michael's car gave me a sinking feeling in my stomach. Would Michael really have sent Steven to jail as he had claimed?

Michael started the car's engine. He acted as if he didn't want to go into detail about Steven's situation with me. This made my heart race even faster, as I was already anxious.

"You're not going to put Steven in jail, are you?" Uncomfortable, I asked Michael, with my face turned to him.

"Are you reluctant to let him go?" Michael continued driving his car. He didn't even bother looking at me. His voice sounded soft. Hence, I wasn't sure if he was delighted or upset. I couldn't always see through Michael's thoughts. Even at this point, I couldn't figure out what he was thinking.

"Steven will always be my brother. I cannot bear the thought of him going to jail. Surely you're frightening Steven, then? You wouldn't put him in jail, would you?"

Steven was still my brother, no matter what he had done. Of course, I hoped that he wouldn't wind up in prison.

"Yeah, I'm just trying to scare him a little bit. However, Xavier's gangsters will be locked up tomorrow. I promised you that no one would ever be able to hurt you, and I will have to keep my word."

My tense muscles were eased by Michael's reassuring responses. Thankfully, Michael was simply frightening Steven. My parents would kill me if Steven were ever imprisoned.

"I hope Steven has learned his lesson this time around and will improve from here on. I truly hope he doesn't go on living like this anymore." I let out a sigh of despair. Thinking back on Steven's deeds, I was deeply frustrated. How long would it take for Steven to mature and stop causing me so much stress?

"Don't overestimate your brother. I told you that people are resistant to change. Sometimes, I wonder why you and your family members have such different personalities. You don't feel like family at all."

Every time I had a glimmer of hope for Steven, Michael was there to remind me of the reality. However, what he said at the end made me quite upset.

"What are you talking about? Obviously, we're related. Besides, having different personalities in a family is very normal."

At times, I felt like I wasn't truly a part of the family. Mom and Dad were always hot and cold to me. I felt as if I were an outsider. Because of that, I made a considerable effort to improve my relationship with them. But no matter how hard I tried, I couldn't obtain the desired results.

"I guess so." Michael lightly blurted out those three words and remained silent for the rest of the journey. However, his words made me feel uneasy.

After returning to the mansion, I called my mother. I did not tell her that Steven had been hanging out with gangsters. To ease her heart, I simply told her that he didn't answer her calls because he had been drinking too much.

What happened today was a close shave. Despite the fact that there had been no harm done, I was nevertheless terrified. There were far too many evil people in our society. Anyone and everyone could run into them at any time.

After a quick power nap, it was already afternoon. In the meantime, Michael had already returned to work. As I remembered, it was the day of my prenatal checkup. In order to avoid wasting Michael's time, I decided to go on my own and not tell him about it.

Joy filled my heart as I walked alone on the sidewalk, thinking about how the baby in my womb was growing day by day.

At that very instant, a beep came from behind me. As I frowned and turned around, I saw a silver Maserati.

I squinted a little bit. I had no idea who this car belonged to as I had never seen it before.

I turned around and kept going, ignoring the car as I went. At that exact moment, a familiar voice called out to me from behind.

“Anna.” It was Ronan’s voice.

I felt a slight shiver run down my spine. I turned around once more. This time, Ronan had already pulled up in front of me with his head popping out the window.

When I realized it was really Ronan, I was taken aback. This man had been driving a flashy red Ferrari for as long as I knew. I felt a little out of place when I saw him driving a more toned-down sports car today.

“Why are you here?” I halted my steps and greeted Ronan softly as I looked at him.

“I was just passing by. How about you? Where are you heading to?”

In Ronan’s eyes, there was tenderness. The faintest smile appeared on his handsome face. It was a lovely sight to see.

“I... am going to the hospital for a checkup.”

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After a moment of silence, I decided to tell him the truth.

When I mentioned a checkup, Ronan immediately understood what I was referring to. The light in his eyes dimmed as soon as the words came out of my mouth. After a long pause, he finally smiled at me again.

“I was just about to go to the hospital. Hop on. I’ll drive you there.” As Ronan was speaking, he had already gotten down from his car. He went over to the passenger seat and opened the door for me.

“It’s okay. I can get there by myself.”

It was clear to me by the look of sadness in Ronan's eyes that he hadn't totally moved on. That was one of the reasons I avoided getting too close to him.

The door had been opened for me by Ronan when I turned down his offer. He frowned and glanced at me as if he was a little let down.

"What's the problem? I'm only offering you a ride since I'm also on my way. Do you have to avoid me like that? Are you really so afraid of me?" Ronan spoke softly. Even so, it was loud enough to sense his disappointment.

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I sighed in exasperation. I didn't know what to say. I wasn't afraid of Ronan. I just didn't want him to feel upset because of me. Every time I looked at his sad eyes, I felt terrible.

"I didn't mean that. I was just..." Ronan kept staring into my eyes as I opened my mouth and tried to think of something to say.

"All right, I know what you're trying to say. You don't need to say it. I was just kidding." Ronan unknowingly let out a cynical smile. Seeing him in this manner brought up memories from the past.

I was stunned. Ronan remained patiently at the door, waiting for me to get into the car. Eventually, I made my way over to him.

While I was in Ronan's car, I felt uncomfortable being in an enclosed space with him.

Ever since I got together with Michael, my feelings for Ronan have changed. We didn't argue at all during this time. It was as if we were trying to keep the atmosphere down on purpose. However, by doing it purposefully, the awkwardness was made worse.

"Why did you drive a different car today? What happened to your flashy Ferrari?"

For the whole trip, neither of us spoke a word. As a result of my desire to avoid further awkwardness, I spoke up.

"I just thought switching my car would switch my mood." Ronan spoke faintly. Although he didn't say anything specific, it felt to me that he was talking about our situation.

"Don't you think this silver sports car suits me better since it looks more depressing?" Ronan looked at me after I stopped talking. I could tell from his eyes that he was smiling, but he didn't truly mean it.

To the people around him, Ronan appeared to be depressed. The once-vibrant young man had long vanished. When comparing him today to before, he had

undergone a major transformation. He matured a lot more, but his smile lost a lot of its radiance.

And it was because of me that he turned into someone like that.

“Do you still mind me being together with Michael?”

Before I turned to face Ronan, I had been silent for quite some time. I couldn't help myself but ask him this question over and over again. All I ever wanted for Ronan was to return to the way he used to be.

“I'd be lying if I said I didn't mind. However, as long as you're happy and Michael is able to give you the happiness you desire, I won't mind.”

As far as I knew, Ronan was the one who had been looking out for me this whole time. I had found my other half. My only hope was for him to do the same soon.

Ronan opened the back door for me as soon as we arrived at the hospital so that I could skip the line and head straight to my checkup.

Before he bumped into me, I had no idea if Ronan wanted to come to the hospital. However, he was right outside the door when I went in for my appointment, doing nothing but waiting.

There were a few pregnant women waiting outside last night when I got out of the ultrasound room. I overheard them whispering about how handsome my husband was.

Ronan was, of course, the husband they were referring to. For a moment, I was a little embarrassed as we had already developed an uncomfortable relationship between us. I felt even more twisted in my heart when people misunderstood the situation.

On the contrary, Ronan's mood improved as a result of their conversation.

Ronan was following right behind me as I made my way to the elevator. I had to stop and stare at him because I couldn't hold my emotions in any longer.

“I'm done with my checkup. I appreciate you taking me to the hospital today. If there isn't anything else, I shall make a move.”

Despite the fact that I was thanking Ronan with my words, I wanted him to quit following me. We didn't have a good relationship. Hence, I'd feel even more awkward if he kept following me.

“Since I'm here and I have nothing else to do, let me take you home.” Ronan decided to join me in the elevator as soon as I entered it.

There was a devilish grin on his face.

I sighed exasperatedly as I stared at his face. I was confident he did it on purpose. He only wanted the opportunity to spend more time with me.

"It's fine. I'll leave on my own. It'll be difficult for you to send me home." I insisted on declining Ronan's offer since it was inappropriate for us to be so close, given our current relationship.

"I'm just offering you a ride home. You don't have to be so adamant about rejecting my offer. We are, after all, friends. Simply think of it as a friend helping a friend."

Ronan's eyes began to lose their sparkle. He was clearly hurt by my decision to reject him. Despite this, he refused to let me go and insisted on sending me home.

"Ronan—"

"Please don't constantly turn me down. I'm aware of your concerns. Don't worry. I will not ruin your relationship with Michael. All I want to do is to keep an eye out for you." My words were interrupted by Ronan before I had a chance to finish. A sad gaze flashed across his pair of sparkling eyes.

As far as I could tell, I was supposed to say no. However, my heart broke every time I saw his sorrowful eyes. Ronan's sadness seemed to stem only from my actions.

Ronan had always treated me well. It was just unfortunate that he had feelings for the wrong person. He shouldn't have liked me from the start because I was already in a complicated relationship with Michael at the time.

"Let's go then." I was convinced in the end. I spoke with a dropped head as if I didn't want to.

I couldn't help but sigh in frustration once more. In the end, Ronan had to come up with the solution on his own. Any effort I made to convince him would be in vain otherwise. Besides that, my rejection would just intensify his heartbreak.

I then entered Ronan's car. He might have felt the same way about the awkwardness of the situation, so he turned up the music to make it more bearable.