

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 431

Follow Suit

“You don’t have to apologize to me. No matter what you say, I can never forgive you. Nicholas, I’m utterly disappointed with you. I never imagined you would do that to me!”

I shuddered at the thought of last night when he forcefully trapped me in his arms and kissed me. He said he was not able to control himself. But, if I was not successful in resisting his advances, who knows what would have happened? Was he really going to rape me?

The incident made me furious, and I could not possibly forget about it in such a short time. Perhaps, I still trusted Nicholas. As such, I felt hurt that he would treat me that way.

“Anna, I know that you’re furious with me. You can scold or hit me all you want, but you can’t say that to me. It makes me anxious. I really like you, so I have no idea why you would reject me.”

A deep frown appeared on Nicholas’ forehead. Although he sounded like he was apologizing, he did not act like he was sorry. He probably thought it was my problem.

“Well, the fact remains that I don’t like you! Nicholas, you are a clever and capable man, so it must be difficult to put down your ego to pursue a woman. Even though you did that for me, I am not the person for you.”

Nicholas was as outstanding as Michael, and many women would come running into his embrace with a flick of his finger. As such, he could have chosen anyone he wanted other than me.

Ultimately, I would never be the person for him, and I could never end up with him.

I have thought it through. Even if I did not end up with Michael, I would never want to have a relationship with Nicholas because I simply did not fancy him. When he forced himself onto me last night, all I felt was repulsion. In fact, it still haunts me even now.

From that moment on, I became convinced that we had no future together. I knew I did not love Nicholas since I could not even imagine sleeping with him. Being friends was the best thing we could do.

After hearing what I said, Nicholas' face fell, and sadness was apparent in his eyes.

“I came here today to apologize to you. No matter what your heart thinks or says, I still have to express how sorry I am. I am also surprised by my rash actions last night.”

Nicholas spoke calmly while looking at me with guilt.

“Okay, I got it. If there's nothing else, you should go. I still have a lot of work to do,” I replied coldly, as I did not want to discuss the incident again.

Then, I lowered my head and never looked back up.

He decided to apologize, but it was my decision to accept it or not. To me, it was simply too soon to forgive him.

“Okay, I’ll let you go back to your work. I’ll head out first.”

Seeing how reluctant I was to speak with him, Nicholas did not push me further. When he walked to the door, he looked back to glance at me before opening the door to leave.

It was almost time to get off work when I received a call from Natalie, who I had not seen for a year. Since I had returned, she suggested that we should meet up. Unable to outtalk her, I finally agreed.

I followed the address she gave me after work and arrived at a family restaurant. From the looks of the place, I knew she had to spend about a few hundred in the restaurant to treat me to a good meal. It was a generous act for someone with her income.

When I entered the restaurant, I spotted Natalie waiting at a table with her boyfriend, Yuval. They chose a quieter area as Natalie knew noisy places were not for me.

Once they saw me, Natalie beamed and waved enthusiastically at me.

Chuckling at her cute reaction, I strode in her direction. After I came back to the country, I ran into many issues. Despite so, I felt comforted to have such a good friend who would support me whenever I needed help.

“Anna, you’re finally here. We waited such a long time for you and almost thought you would bail on us.”

“Well, you said you wanted to meet with me, so how could I not come? Besides, we haven’t seen each other for a long time, and I would like to catch up with you,” I replied with a smile as I sat opposite Natalie.

“All right, let’s start eating. See how much I’ve ordered. These are all your favorite dishes.” Natalie gestured to the table of food. “Since you were overseas for a year, I figured you would miss having local food. Tonight, you can eat to your heart’s content.”

Natalie grinned. Instantly, I felt a warm sensation spreading through my heart.

Sitting beside Natalie, Yuval added, “Exactly. Natalie went all out for you today.”

Looking at how well the couple got along, I could not help but be amused. Nonetheless, I still felt happy for Natalie.

A year had passed, and they still had a great relationship. I guess Natalie and Yuval are serious about this relationship. I hope they can stay blessed for the rest of their lives from the bottom of my heart.

“Natalie, you have been with Yuval for more than a year. Don’t you plan to get married soon? I would love to attend your wedding.”

I shot Natalie a playful look. She was no longer a child now, and I felt anxious for her since she had not gotten married.

“Hey. Why did you have to bring that up? This man hasn’t even proposed to me. Besides, I am not so desperate to the point where I have to force him to marry me.”

Although Natalie spoke like she did not care, I saw the displeasure in her eyes when she turned to look at Yuval. It seemed like she was unhappy with him.

Meanwhile, Yuval lowered his head awkwardly, unsure of what to say.

Looking at the situation, I could tell Yuval had not proposed to Natalie yet. And knowing Natalie’s character, I knew it bothered her.

“Well, both of you have been dating for a long time. You might as well settle down now. That is unless you plan on ditching Natalie.” I raised my brows at Yuval.

Seeing how annoyed Natalie seemed, I knew I had to help her out as her good friend.

“Of course not. I want to stay with Natalie for the rest of my life. So, I will marry her, eventually. It’s just that I am still preparing to propose to her at the right time,” Yuval muttered shyly and looked away in embarrassment.

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Plans With Michael

As soon as those words left Yuval's mouth, I could see Natalie's face lit up. Natalie can't even hide her emotions, and it's obvious she can't wait to get married.

“I see. When you get married, don't forget to send me an invitation. I will definitely send you a huge monetary gift to congratulate you!”

I felt glad to see how blissful Natalie seemed. Although my marriage was a flop, I hoped they would have a good one.

We went on to chat a little more before we dug in. Even though it was not a fancy restaurant, the food was yummy. I was impressed by Natalie's pick.

Halfway into the meal, Natalie suddenly stopped and looked at me hesitantly.

“I invited someone else today, Anna. But I didn't tell you because I was afraid you would get mad at me,” Natalie murmured while cautiously looking at me.

Immediately, I frowned. I did not know who Natalie meant or who was the person I would hate to meet.

“Who is it? Why aren't they here yet?” I asked quietly.

“When I called him, he was in the middle of a meeting, but he said he would be here after it ends.”

Natalie looked guilty and could not meet my eyes.

“Who did you invite? He sounds like a diligent person to still have a meeting at this hour.”

I started to get curious about the man that Natalie mentioned. After all, we did not share many mutual friends. Even among those friends, none of them were close to us. I did not think Natalie would invite those people to such an intimate gathering.

Natalie looked even more uncomfortable after my question. She stared at me for a long time, as she was too afraid to speak out.

Seeing the way Natalie acted, I had a bad feeling in my guts. I stared back at her in confusion.

“Natalie, stop trying to keep me in suspense. Tell me already! How could I guess who the person is?”

My curiosity only continued to peak as Natalie did not usually stutter.

“It’s... M-Michael.”

Finally, Natalie managed to name the person. Instantly, my heart almost stopped beating.

“Michael? Why the hell did you call him and invite him here?”

I looked at Natalie in shock as I did not expect her to invite Michael over. She knew what happened between Michael and me, so why would she torture me like that?

In response to my accusing glare, Natalie lowered her head in guilt.

“Anna, although you told me what the Shaw family did to you a year ago, I still think Michael was true to you. I can tell that he truly loves you,” Natalie earnestly met my eyes and stated.

I was speechless when I heard what she said. Given my relationship with Michael, I had been trying to avoid him. Yet, Natalie took the initiative to invite him here. It was akin to handing me over to him on a silver platter.

At that moment, all I wanted to do was to leave the place, for I had no desire to see Michael.

“Natalie, the last time we met, I told you in detail everything the Shaw family did to me last year. So how could you do this? Don’t you know how much it hurts for me to face him?”

My emotions got the better of me as I lashed out agitatedly. I did not blame Natalie as I know she was only trying to help me. However, it was still hard for me to accept it.

“Anna, I think he had nothing to do with what happened in the past. You have no idea how he acted after you disappeared. He tried to look for you like a crazed man, and he came to my house every other day to ask about you. I could sense how genuine he was then,” Natalie explained.

“The day you went missing, your face was all over the news. He offered a five million reward to anyone who knew where you were. If he did not love you, why would he go to such lengths to look for you, especially after your breakup?”

After I heard what had happened, my heart thumped. I did not know these things had happened after my departure. If Natalie did not tell me about it, I would have assumed it was all a lie.

My eyes widened, and I stared at Natalie in shock. It took a long while before I could regain my composure as I felt a mix of emotions.

At the same time, someone entered the restaurant. It was a handsome man dressed in a black suit. Expressionless, he looked dark and mysterious. The man looked around before heading for our table when he noticed us.

Although we shared the same bed last night, my heart still fluttered.

I could hear his footsteps getting louder and louder. Soon, he stopped at our table and sat beside me.

We were sitting so close together that I could feel his breath.

Initially, I thought I would not have to see him over these few days. Little did I expect for him to appear before me again.

Feeling uncomfortable, I sat there in silence. The atmosphere had changed since Michael came.

At the same time, I shot Natalie a death glare. Although I did not blame her, I still felt annoyed with her. It was not easy to make Michael promise that he would not see me again for the next few days. Yet, Natalie purposely set us up to meet each other.

Natalie felt awful seeing how quiet I became. She explained, “Anna, please don’t blame me. I did this for your good. I know you still love Michael, so I thought both of you could take this time to clear up any misunderstandings you had.”

What is going through her mind? Of course, I know what happened. However, no one else can understand what I went through over the last year better than I did. I might still love him, but we can’t ever be together anymore. I can’t get back with a man who had hurt me before.

I was not as forgiving as to give him a second chance. After all, I did not want to go through so many hardships in a relationship. Getting hurt once is enough to haunt me for the rest of my life.

“Forget it. Let’s not talk about it and eat up. After the meal, I still have to return to the office to work overtime as I have many documents to deal with.”

Initially, I planned to spend the night chatting with Natalie. Since we had not seen each other for a year, there were many things we had to catch up on. However, Michael’s presence made me want to leave as soon as possible.

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Your Girlfriend Asked

“Your company is newly established. How could you have that many things to do? Are you trying to give an excuse to avoid me?”

This time, Michael spoke up. He sounded upset with what I had said.

I could not help but panic when I realized he had noticed what I was trying to do. Despite so, I quickly composed myself.

It was true that I did not want to see him, and we both knew it. Therefore, there was no point in trying to conceal it. However, I could not say that in front of Natalie and Yuval.

“I have more things to work on precisely because my company is new,” I casually stated.

Acting as though I was unaffected, I helped myself to the dishes. I did not want to seem too uptight in front of Natalie and Yuval.

“Well, I can help you with it after we finish dinner. I’m sure I have a greater ability than you in dealing with your work.” Michael spoke again, and I felt the urge to throw something in his direction.

He was well aware that it was an excuse to cut short the time we were together, but he had to say that on purpose.

I thought he said he would never appear before me again after last night. Did he erase whatever he said in his mind?

I quickly rejected his offer with a slight frown, “There is no need for that. I don’t need an outsider poking into my company affairs. What should I do if someone leaks my company’s internal information? If such a thing happens, I think we would both get implicated.”

He did not say anything else afterward. However, his tightly knitted brows signaled he was unhappy with the situation. Nonetheless, I could not be bothered by what he was thinking. I only knew that I did not want to see him anymore.

Meanwhile, sensing the hostility between Michael and me, Natalie and Yuval sat opposite us in discomfort.

Then, Yuval broke the silence. "It's dinner time, so let's not talk about work. Let's have a good meal for now. It must be tiring to have work on your mind all the time."

Smiling, he spoke warmly, hoping to ease the situation.

We all knew he wanted to break up our bicker. Too tired to retort, I decided to say nothing.

Similarly, Michael kept quiet and started to eat. Perhaps, he shared the same thoughts as me.

From my memory, Michael would never come to such a restaurant for a meal. He would usually visit a fancy hotel restaurant. Therefore, I was surprised that he would turn up here. Did his taste change in a year? He eats like us commoners now.

It was a depressing meal. Although Natalie and Yuval tried to salvage the atmosphere, I could not bring myself to show any enthusiasm with Michael still beside me. I could only try my best to humor them with a few words.

Finally, I could not take it any longer halfway through the meal. Placing my fork down, I looked up at Natalie.

“I’m full. I have something to deal with, so I’ll head off first. If time allows, I’ll meet you another time.”

“Anna, you didn’t eat much. Are you full? Why don’t you have more food before you leave?” Natalie questioned.

After hearing what I said, she stood up hurriedly and tried to stop me.

Of course, I knew she wanted to make me stay and interact with Michael. Unfortunately, because I knew the reason behind her words, I wanted to leave more than ever.

“There’s no need because I’m full. I’m afraid I can’t stay any longer and should hurry back.”

With that, I turned to leave, but Michael suddenly rose up from his seat.

“Since you’re rushing, I’ll give you a lift. I don’t think you drove here, right?”

He sounded calm, and I could not sense any emotions in his voice. Yet, I felt a wave of complex emotions wash over me.

“It’s all right. I don’t want to bother you, so I’ll hail a taxi instead.”

Looking back at him, I did not hesitate to reject him.

“It’s peak time now. Since your work is urgent, are you sure you have the patience to wait for a taxi?” Michael reasoned with a frown.

He did not seem angry because I turned him down.

After what he said, it would be clear that I was making excuses if I declined him again. It would expose that I was lying earlier.

I glared at Michael with a glimpse of annoyance. He must be toying with me. Have I pissed him off in any way such that he can't leave me be ?

Unfortunately, I had no other choice at that moment. I could only either stay at dinner or take Michael's car.

Previously, I already stated that I had to leave. If I sat back down, Natalie and Yuval would be able to tell the problem between Michael and me.

Although Natalie was my best friend, and we could talk about anything under the sun, my relationship was something I had to deal with alone.

No matter how close we were or how much we understood each other, I knew best about my feelings.

“Well, I'm sorry to bother you then. Please send me to my office. Thank you,” I muttered to Michael.

I glanced at him once before turning away to walk out the door without looking back again. Although I could not see Michael's face, I knew he followed me with a triumphant smile on his face.

I knew he did all of this on purpose. But regardless of how angry I was, I could not mention it yet.

When I climbed into his car, I looked out the window and kept quiet. I did not talk to him, and the atmosphere turned cold. In that situation, Michael's face darkened.

He could not take the silence any longer and asked me in exasperation, "Do you plan to not talk to me and keep quiet for the rest of the journey?"

"I don't think there is anything left for us to discuss. Didn't you forget what you told me last night? You said you would disappear from my sight for these few days. However, you came to the restaurant today. How can I ever trust you?"

This morning, I was still full of confidence that I would not run into him anymore, and it lifted my spirits. Unfortunately, the dinner made my blood boil.

"I remember whatever I said. But it was your best friend who called me over today for dinner. I did not come on purpose. You should blame Natalie and question her instead of interrogating me if you are so displeased!"

He had a gloomy expression on his face as he flatly pushed the blame on Natalie.

The way he accused Natalie only made me livid. How can he be so shameless as to hold Nat accountable for everything?

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Useless Pepper Spray

I couldn't find a reason to refute him. After all, he wouldn't have appeared before my eyes had Natalie not called him.

“You must have done this on purpose. You should have rejected Natalie since you knew I was coming!”

He might have said so, but I knew he wouldn't have appeared had I not come. In other words, he made that promise to Natalie because of me.

“You're right. I came because of you. So what? I said I wouldn't take the initiative to look for you, but it doesn't mean I'd say no to anyone who arranged for us to meet. I should really thank your best friend for making this happen.”

A corner of his lips quirked up. It was as if he didn't care how mad I was. In fact, he seemed to enjoy seeing how annoyed I was.

I clenched my fists and tried to contain my anger.

Instead of arguing with him, I turned around and looked out of the window. Forget it. I wouldn't be able to out-talk him anyway.

The man smirked but didn't continue with the debate. All of a sudden, he made a U-turn.

“Michael, what are you doing? We're supposed to head in the office's direction!”

I could not help but panic upon realizing he was driving further away from the office. What is he doing?

“Going back to the office to work is just an excuse, isn’t it? You only said that to get rid of me. Don’t make up this kind of ridiculous story to fool me, Anna.” He exposed me in a calm voice.

The expression on my face changed, and I felt a pang of guilt.

He’s right. I just made that up so that I could run away from him.

“Then why did you insist on giving me a lift if you knew that was a lie? You’re doing this on purpose!”

I tilted my head aside and glared at him. He knew I was lying, and I’m sure he knew I was trying to avoid him. Yet, he still deliberately burst the bubble. What does he want from me?

“Yes. I did it on purpose. I just want to stay by your side. You should know that, right?”

I nearly choked because I didn’t expect him to come clean so quickly. Has he no shame?

“Where are we going?”

Anxiety crept in, as I had no clue where he was taking me since we were not going to the office.

“I’m sending you home. Where else do you think we’re going? Unless you want to come to my place?”

I heaved a sigh of relief at his answer. Even so, I was a little jittery when I recalled yesterday’s incident at my house.

This man is capable of anything.

Michael sped along the road. In just a while, we arrived at my house. I got out of the car the moment he parked the vehicle in front of the entrance.

He, too, got down and followed closely behind.

I turned around and stared at him. “Thanks for sending me home. You can leave now.”

After saying that in a calm voice, I opened the door and went into the house.

Before I could close the door, he barged into the living hall like he did last night. There was one moment I thought I was about to explode with rage.

But no matter how I expressed my frustration, I knew he would continue to do as he pleased. Why should I torture myself? I ignored him and went straight to the bathroom after closing the door.

By the time I finished my shower, he was still sitting on the couch in the living hall. I walked past him to get myself a bottle of water from the refrigerator. After taking a few sips, I went straight back to my bedroom.

To prevent history from repeating itself, I locked the door from the inside. This would stop him from coming in, especially if he had nasty thoughts.

Since I've done my part to protect myself, I'll let him do whatever he wants for now. Let's see how much patience he has!

I even bought pepper spray today to place under my pillow. He better be prepared to taste my wrath should he force himself on me again.

I'll let him know I'm not a pushover!

Now that the door was locked, he would not be able to come into my room. Even if he did, I still had the pepper spray that I could use on him. I've gotten all my ducks in a row, so he better be prepared to face the music if he attempted to do what he did to me last night.

With all the safety measures taken, I felt safe. That was why I could fall asleep as soon as I lay on the bed.

All of a sudden, I could feel a hand touching my body in the middle of the night. I could also feel my legs spread open, and my private part became numb.

Am I having a wet dream? It feels real, though.

Sleeping naked after the shower was a habit of mine, and that was why the hand that caressed my body felt real.

The hand continued to snake around my body. It even teased my private part, causing me to experience an indescribable itch.

To suppress the feeling, I turned to the other side of the bed. How could the feeling be so real if it's just a dream? I must be crazy!

The tinkling sensation did vanish for a moment. Just when I thought I could sleep in peace, the sensation came back. It became even more intense.

I forced myself to open my eyes to take a glance around me. What I saw next to my bed made me scream and widened my eyes.

Michael was lying on my bed. While one of his hands was cupping my breast, his other hand was fondling my nether regions.

I shrieked in shock and kicked him. Anyone would have reacted the way I did had they seen a man lying in their bed and doing the things he did.

My aggressive kick caught Michael by surprise. He let out a deep grunt and got up from the bed.

“How did you come in? I thought I locked the door?”

I was so mad at him that I could not stop shivering. If only I could go up to him and give him two tight slaps!

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I Will Stay Away For The Time Being

“What makes you think you can keep me away from your room? If I could enter your body, I could enter your room just as easily.” He crossed his arms and responded with a smirk.

What a scumbag!

This man had utterly pushed my buttons and crossed the line.
“Get the hell out of my room! If you dare to do those things to me again, I won’t let you off!”

While looking up at him with a scowl, I reached out for the pepper spray beneath the pillow. I’ll use it on him if he comes near me again!

“You won’t let me off? What can you do to me? Do you think you can fight me if I were to force myself on you?” He raised his brows when making that sarcastic remark.

A vortex of anger continued to swirl inside me when I saw the despised look on his face. I’ve never seen such a shameless man in my life ever!

“Are you trying to challenge my patience, Michael? Do you think I’m a pushover? Listen carefully. I’ll teach you a lesson you’ll never forget if you try to be funny with me!”

At that point, I had gotten hold of the pepper spray. Should he come closer to my bed, I’d spray him with it!

I couldn’t wait to see how effective the pepper spray is!

“I don’t think you want to teach me a lesson. I think you’re eager to have sex with me. Just tell me if you want it. You don’t have to beat around the bush. I’ll be more than willing to serve you and make you happy.”

It was as if my threat had fallen on deaf ears. Once again, he raised his brows and smirked.

Words caught in my throat, and I didn't know what to say anymore. I could only shoot daggers at him. This man is very good at twisting my words!

He didn't seem to be bothered by what I said. In just a matter of seconds, he crawled onto my bed. I took out the pepper spray and aimed it at his face. But when I was about to press the top of the canister, he swung his hand against the pepper spray and knocked it away.

He moved so swiftly that I didn't even know what was happening. My wrist went numb for a moment before a sharp pain developed.

I looked at the pepper spray on the floor before shooting a sullen glare at Michael. He must have known that I'd be using it on him. That's why he was well prepared!

The man followed my line of sight and saw the pepper spray. His eyes instantly darkened, and he bellowed, "Pepper spray? Do you think I'm a pervert? How could you use this on me? Anna Garcia, you're becoming more and more heartless!"

"You left me with no choice! You forced yourself on me twice. I wouldn't have resorted to this kind of self-defense had you not done this to me! So, you should blame yourself instead!"

Though I was incapable of defending myself at this time, I refused to give in. I was a strong-willed woman, after all. I wouldn't have suffered such humiliation had he not pulled these dirty tricks on me.

“I forced myself on you? If I remember correctly, you seemed to enjoy what I did. I could tell from the way you moaned, not forgetting how wet you were. And now, you’re telling me you were uncomfortable?” he asked in a deep voice while walking toward the bed.

My heart couldn’t stop hammering. “Stop! Stop right there! You’re just gonna make me despise you more if you keep doing this!”

How I wished I could dig a hole and hide. Admittedly, I somewhat enjoyed what he did to me, even though it was against my will. Though he indeed could satisfy my sexual needs, it didn’t mean he could do as he pleased!

After hearing what I said, he stopped approaching. A hard glint flashed across his eyes. I could tell he was infuriated.

He shut his eyes and took a deep breath to contain his anger. He then leaned beside me and pulled me into his arms.

My heart started racing when I felt the warmth from his chest. My gut instinct told me the man was going to do what he did to me last night again.

My body might enjoy such physical intimacy, but it didn’t mean I could mentally accept it. Hatred surged within me.

Just when I thought Michael was about to violate my body, he stopped moving. The man closed his eyes and remained still.

I peeped at him in confusion.

“Sleep well. I don’t just want to have sex with you. I want you to come back to me.”

He sounded casual, but I could tell he was serious about it.

My heart could not help but flutter upon hearing that remark. I kept my eyes shut because I was afraid I would lose myself if I gazed into his eyes.

“Anna, you’re the only woman I love. I’ll do whatever it takes to keep you by my side. Don’t you dare run away from me!”

Every word he uttered sounded sincere, and my heart couldn’t stop racing.

One year had passed, but I had never forgotten about Michael. I hated him, but my love for him had never disappeared. It was so deep that I couldn’t stop myself from holding grudges against him when the incident happened a year ago.

Michael didn’t say anything after that. Perhaps, he thought I wouldn’t be giving him any response.

Although I closed my eyes, I couldn’t sleep for a long time. The man, who was still hugging me from behind, had stopped forcing himself on him. I could also feel his breathing had returned to normal.

Before this, I thought he just wanted to release his sexual tension on him. However, after listening to what he said, I guess that was not the case. Does he mean it when he said he loved me?

I wanted to believe him, but I couldn't bring myself to do so. I was afraid that I might go soft on him and forget about my revenge. How could I fall for his sweet talk when I've yet to take Amaury away from him?

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The Call From Lincoln

I tossed and turned in bed for a long time before falling asleep. When I woke up the following morning, Michael's side of the bed was already empty, just like how it was the day before. For some reason, that made me sad.

I recalled what he told me last night and felt conflicting emotions warring within me.

Then, I checked my phone, hoping that he had sent a message. I could not help but feel disappointed when I saw that there was none.

In the next few days, Michael still did not appear before me. It made me feel both relieved and a little sad.

Ever since that night, he seemed to have disappeared from my life. It felt like we had returned to being strangers again.

Previously, we agreed to meet in Birchwood every Friday so that I could see Amaury. On Friday evening, I came to Birchwood again. However, Michael did not show up. It was the nanny who brought Amaury there.

I searched the house, hoping to find him somewhere. Once I confirmed that he was nowhere to be seen, I felt even more dejected.

“Ms. Garcia, Mr. Shaw is unable to come here today. So, he asked me to bring Amaury here,” the nanny explained as she brought Amaury to me. She seemed to have guessed what I was thinking.

Her words confirmed that Michael would not be coming here. Although I felt kind of disappointed, I did not show it on my face.

I accepted Amaury from the nanny. Perhaps due to our previous meeting, Amaury seemed quite comfortable with me. He even smiled at me.

I could not help feeling warm as I looked at my son’s smile. It made all my troubles disappear instantly.

“Amaury, say Mommy,” I teased Amaury and touched his chubby cheeks with my finger. He’s adorable.

“Mommy...” Amaury gurgled.

I was only playing with him and didn’t expect him to really call me Mommy.

I remembered how content I felt when he called me Mommy the last time. Now, hearing him calling me Mommy again made me happy.

I brought Amaury to the living room and played with him. Soon, all my sadness disappeared.

That night, I hugged Amaury to sleep. It had been more than a year since I had him sleeping by my side. It felt like bliss.

The following day was Saturday, so I did not have to go to work. As such, I sent Michael a message saying that I would like to spend more time with Amaury. He replied with a word: Sure.

He didn't bother to say anything else, and I was a bit disheartened by that. Previously, he would shower me with attention every day. Now, he only replied with a single word whenever I messaged him. I couldn't help feeling sad about the disparity.

My disappointment grew as I continued to look at his message. I kept staring at the phone and wondered if he would send another one. However, minutes passed, and nothing more came from him.

I laughed, mocking at my stupidity. At the same time, I felt dejected and wondered if I had overthought my importance to Michael. Perhaps, he never cared about me. That all those sweet words he said to me meant nothing.

I'm stupid for thinking that he loves me. I should have known his true self after what happened a year ago. How could I still expect anything from him? I am truly an idiot.

"Anna, even a b*tch should have standards!" I muttered softly and reminded myself. I hated myself because I still dared to hope for something from Michael even though I knew he did not love me.

After that, I spent the whole morning with Amaury. At noon, the nanny received a call from Lincoln. When he heard that Amaury

was with me, he went silent for a while. Then, he urged the nanny to bring Amaury home immediately.

I smirked but did not stop him. My heart turned cold as I recalled how cruelly he treated me a year ago.

Previously, he refused to let me see Amaury. As such, I returned to this country with the determination to get Amaury back.

After the nanny left with Amaury, I left Birchwood and returned to my apartment. Soon, I received a phone call from the Shaw residence. Since I had stayed in the Shaw residence for nearly a year, I could still remember the number.

Seeing that it was a landline number, I suspected that it was Lincoln who had called. With this in mind, I answered the phone immediately.

“Hello,” I answered the call in an emotionless tone.

“Anna, is it really you? Have you returned to the country?” Lincoln asked tentatively on the other end.

I hated Lincoln more than anyone, including Michael. Therefore, I replied coldly, “Yes, Mr. Shaw. It’s me. What’s the matter?”

“I almost couldn’t believe it when the nanny told me that you have returned. So, I called to confirm whether it was true. I didn’t expect you to come back.” Lincoln’s tone was calm, but if one were to listen closely, one could hear that he did not wish for me to come back.

I had no reason to show any sympathy to Lincoln. Hence, I smirked and said indifferently, “Why? Are you disappointed about my return? Or perhaps, are you worried about me meeting Amaury?”

In the past, I was a gentle person and had never spoken to Lincoln in such a tone. Therefore, Lincoln was shocked by how intimidating I sounded. He was stunned for a moment before saying, “Why would I be disappointed? We were a family in the past. Besides, we haven’t met for a year. So, I’m thinking of inviting you to lunch.”

Lincoln sounded gentle on the phone. I listened to his lies and my smirk widened.

This is obviously a trap. Does he think that he can still bully me around as he did previously? Since he took the initiative to invite me to lunch, I should agree to meet with him and see what he’s planning.

Lincoln had shown me tremendous cruelty a year before. As such, I knew he was up to no good when he asked me to meet right after finding out that I had returned. However, I had become a different person compared to a year ago. I was no longer someone he could bully easily.

“Sure, since you want to meet me for lunch, how could I refuse? Mr. Shaw, you can text me the address of the meeting place. I’ll be there soon,” I replied in an unconcerned tone, smirking while waiting for his reply.

Lincoln was stunned for a moment before he recovered quickly.
“All right, I will send you the address now.”

After hanging up, I soon received a message with the address of our meeting place.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 437

Show No Weakness

I glanced at the message and committed the address to my memory. Then, I deleted it.

After changing my clothes, I left the apartment to go to the appointed restaurant. Once I arrived, a waiter immediately led me to Lincoln’s table.

Even after a year, Lincoln still looked the same. He was as healthy as I remembered. It seemed that he had lived a good life in the past year.

I sat down opposite him and greeted casually, “Mr. Shaw.”

Although I hated Lincoln then, I still had to keep up a pretense of civility. Otherwise, people would deem me immature.

Lincoln was shocked upon seeing me. He probably didn’t expect me to look so much better than I was a year ago.

“Anna, it’s been a year since we last met. I didn’t expect you to grow prettier and youthful,” Lincoln said with a smile. He sounded as if he was complimenting me.

I had heard countless compliments over the course of one year. As a result, Lincoln's praise was nothing to me.

Nonetheless, I still responded with a polite smile, "You seem younger than a year ago. Have you been living well in this past year, Mr. Shaw?"

I turned the focus of the conversation to him.

Lincoln stopped making small talks. He looked at me seriously and asked, "Anna, when did you return here? Where have you been in the past year?"

"I went to Anglandur. I am now the director of Nifty Group." There was no point in hiding this. I wanted Lincoln to know that I had gained position and authority. And that I was no longer the same person he used to bully.

Another look of surprise flashed across his eyes. He gazed at me with a shocked and odd expression.

"You are now a director of an overseas company? That is unexpected," he said.

I smirked and said coldly, "It's not as surprising as you think. After going through such a big upheaval in life, it's only natural that a person would develop tremendous resilience. I should thank you, Mr. Shaw, for hurting me so much that I could achieve what I have today."

Lincoln knew what I meant. His expression stiffened, and the atmosphere turned awkward.

“Anna, I know what happened a year ago hurt you severely. But, it was Michael’s decision. Furthermore, I also felt that you and Michael were unsuitable for each other. After all, his mother is still unconscious in the hospital because of you,” Lincoln said.

When Lincoln brought up Josephine’s condition, I could see the anger in his eyes and sensed his hatred for me.

I believed what happened a year ago had something to do with Josephine. Otherwise, no misunderstanding could have made Michael act with such cruelty toward me.

“Mr. Shaw, I understand you are still angry over this matter and can’t let it go. Do you hate me?” I asked.

I could remember how drastically Lincoln changed his attitude after what happened with Michael.

Lincoln’s expression darkened at that. However, he was a man familiar with social propriety. Therefore, he quickly concealed his emotions and looked at me calmly.

“That is all in the past, so there is no point in mentioning them. Have you met Michael since your return?” Lincoln smiled calmly. Although he told me to let go of the past, his gaze remained threatening.

I regarded him calmly and knew what he was concerned about. I sipped my water unhurriedly before saying, “I’ve met him a few times.”

Lincoln’s expression darkened further upon hearing my nonchalant tone. I immediately sensed that he was hiding

something from Michael and me. For some reason, I kept feeling that Lincoln had done something that he did not want us to know.

“Michael never told me that you’ve returned. I had only just found out today that you are here. Otherwise, I won’t even know that both of you have met,” he replied.

His face had gone a little pale. Although he was still smiling, I could see his real emotions in his eyes.

I did not want to continue wasting my time with pointless conversations. As such, I looked straight at Lincoln and said flatly, “Mr. Shaw, I believe you asked to meet with me because you have something to say. You should get straight to the point. I am very busy nowadays.”

Lincoln stared at me and seemed flabbergasted before his gaze turned conflicted.

In the end, however, he still decided to touch on the main topic. He looked at me and said tentatively, “Anna, since you are doing so well overseas, why did you return? Isn’t it better for you to stay overseas and develop your career there?”

I knew what he was thinking, and it made me want to laugh. One year ago, the Shaw family treated me like trash and kicked me out of the family. Now that I have returned, does he seriously think I would listen to him?

“Whether I chose to develop my career overseas or in this country, that is my freedom. Besides, I have someone important to me in this country. So, don’t you think that I should return?” I answered cryptically.

The someone that I was talking about was Amaury, and I believed he understood who I meant. After all, he had witnessed how crazy I was when he refused to let me see Amaury.

His expression changed slightly upon hearing me. There was a flash of complex emotion in his eyes.

He looked straight into my eyes and hesitated for a long time before saying, “Are you telling me that you returned here for Amaury?”

“Of course. Amaury is the most important person in my life. He is the main reason why I came back here and decided to further my career here. Another reason I returned here is that the company has moved my work back to this country. So, I will be working here from now on,” I answered calmly.

I reckoned he must have wanted to meet me that day so that he could find out when I would be leaving the country. My return must have caused him to worry that I would take Amaury away from him.

As expected, Lincoln began to frown and looked a little panicked after hearing my answer.

“So it turns out that you returned to this country for Amaury’s sake. While I understand that you suffered a lot when you had to separate from him, he has settled well in the Shaw residence. I don’t think you should disturb his life. You want your child to grow up well, don’t you?” he said with a gentle tone as if he was trying to do what was best for Amaury. In actuality, he only wanted to separate me from my son.

He had put on such a kindly expression that I could not resist feeling disgusted.

A year ago, he used cruel means to separate me from Amaury. Now that I finally made my way back, what right does he have to make such a request of me? Furthermore, what makes him think that I would listen to him?

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 438

I Am Not A Saint

Does he think that I am still that weak and helpless woman? Does he think I am still that stupid? What makes him think that he can coax me so easily? If that's what he thinks, I can only say that he deserves to be a laughing stock.

“I'm afraid I can't do that, Mr. Shaw. I came back here to obtain Amaury's custody, and I won't hesitate to do anything to take him back. Amaury is my child. He's my flesh and blood. The Shaw family has no right to keep him!” I said firmly.

I went through ten months of difficult pregnancy and pain to bring Amaury to this world. There is no way that the Shaw family can take him away from me and stop me from seeing him. They have no right to do that to me! If it wasn't for the Shaw family, Amaury would have already been living with me. We would have been happy and content. They were the ones that cruelly tore me away from him and made me lose a year with him. No one could swallow such indignity. Not even a saint.

Lincoln seemed shocked to hear me declaring my intention bluntly. However, he soon recovered, and his eyes gleamed with devious intentions.

“You said you came back to fight for Amaury’s custody. What makes you think that I would agree to this?” he uttered.

“I don’t care whether you agree with it or not. No matter what I have to do, I will get Amaury back. No one can stop me,” I replied.

Although Lincoln tried to intimidate me with his tone, I was not afraid at all. The more he threatened me, the more I desired to make him worry. It made me want to snatch back Amaury from him even sooner.

“Anna, don’t go too far. I asked to meet with you today to have a chat with you. How dare you plan to wrench Amaury’s custody from the Shaw family? What makes you think you can go against us?” Lincoln glared at me. His tone was filled with fury. At the moment, he looked just like when he forced me to leave a year ago.

“The one that has gone too far is the Shaw family. I am no longer the Anna you knew. Your threat no longer scares me. I have the power to get Amaury back. Don’t forget, I now have a large company backing me!” I replied.

The Shaw family’s confidence and arrogance came from their prominent status. In the past, I was just a girl from the countryside and did not have a way to fend for myself. Thus, I had no choice but to let them manipulate me.

However, things had changed. I was no longer the same person, and I would never allow anyone to bully me again. Instead, I would make them experience the pain they inflicted on me.

Lincoln was not stupid. He knew I had changed. Apart from that, he understood that I dared to speak to him in such a confident manner because I had powerful support.

He glared at me furiously. After a long while, he finally took a deep breath to suppress his fury.

“Anna, we were once a family. Do you have to come back and cause chaos? You have gained so much in a year. I’m sure you can find a better man to marry and have more children. Besides, Amaury has also grown used to living in the Shaw residence,” Lincoln said in a calm tone as if he was trying to talk some sense into me.

However, I would not listen to anything he said. He said that I gained a lot in one year. In actuality, I had lost so much more than I had gained.

I lost the man I love and my child. I suffered every day from separation from Amaury.

I met Lincoln’s gaze calmly and said in a chilling tone, “Apart from my child, I don’t want anything else!”

Lincoln scoffed when he saw that his gentle coaxing did not work on me. With his expression darkening from fury, he glared at me and spat in a threatening tone, “Why are you so determined to fight the Shaw family? Do you think you can get your child from

us with your current ability? Aren't you underestimating us a bit too much?"

Facing his wrath, I did not show any fear. After all, I had experienced Lincoln's heartless actions against me before. As such, I had nothing more to fear. It was he who should quiver with fear.

I smirked and looked at Lincoln confidently. "You can wait and see for yourself whether I have the ability to oppose the Shaw family or not. Our companies are rivals. I am confident that my company could take over the Shaw family's asset one day!"

In truth, I did not have any confidence that I could do that. However, I could not give away any fear or hesitation before my enemy. Any doubts would only provide a hint to the enemy of one's weakness.

That was something I had learned over the course of this one year, and it had helped me both at work and in daily life.

Lincoln glared at me coldly. It seemed he was trying to determine the truthfulness of my statement.

"You were once Michael's wife. How could you bring yourself to go against him now?" Lincoln said with a stern expression. His tone was even colder than before.

"It's all thanks to the Shaw family that I turned heartless. All of you had treated me with cruelty and pushed me to this. Why should I care that we were once a family? I shall repay you for your cruelty in multifold!" I retorted.

In the past, Lincoln was my most respected elder. Now, I spoke to him as if he was my enemy.

When I first came to the Shaw family, Lincoln was like a father to me. I thought that he would always treat me with fatherly kindness. However, it turned out that Lincoln only saw me as an outsider. He developed a hatred for me after what happened to Josephine.

“You!” Lincoln slammed his hand on the table and glared at me furiously. However, he did not say anything else.

“Mr. Shaw, I have told you all you wish to know. I have to deal with many matters, so I shall take my leave now,” I said coldly and stood up. Then, I turned to leave without giving him a chance to say anything.

After walking out of the restaurant, I felt much better than when I walked in. Although I said many harsh words, it felt like I had avenged myself.

Before this, I would never have thought that I was a vengeful person.

I drove my car and returned to my apartment. After a shower, I lay on the bed and fell asleep. It would be Monday the next day, and I had to continue poaching clients from Michael’s company.

I knew it would be a tremendously challenging task, but I had to do it. If I wanted to be more powerful, I needed to make more effort.

At midnight, I woke up and could not fall asleep again. With nothing better to do, I turned on my laptop and examined the client list to pick my next target.

I had no idea how Nicholas did it, but he managed to obtain lists of clients in Michael's company. These lists were complete and even stated all the details of their collaboration.

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 439

Poaching Clients

The information was more extensive than I expected. It even got me suspecting that Nicholas got it from an insider. No matter how influential the man is, I don't think he's capable of getting his hands on this much information.

Nicholas refused to answer me when I asked him, so I stopped pestering him about it. After all, my goal was to destroy Michael's company; that was all that mattered then.

After handpicking several clients near the end of their contracts with Michael, I decided to visit them personally because I was confident that I could poach them.

Still, I knew I had to put in extra effort since I learned how careful of a businessman Michael was after the Red Star incident.

Then, I started going through the documents, and before I knew it, it was already past midnight. I was so exhausted by the end of it that my shoulders ached.

When I stayed with the Shaw family, I did not even have to lift a finger to get whatever I wanted. However, compared to that, my present life was much more meaningful.

After quickly fixing up something simple to fill my belly, I went back to bed. My mind was filled with so many ideas that I could barely wait for the next morning to arrive. I was more than ready to approach Michael's clients.

When the following day finally arrived, I quickly jumped out of bed to get dressed. Time was of the essence, and I could not afford to waste even a minute.

After breakfast, I decided to start with a home appliance company that had only worked with Michael for two years. Besides the fact that they were not a long-term client of his, their contract with his company was coming to an end soon, so I thought they would make an easier target.

It did not take long for me to find the client's phone number from the information on hand. After introducing myself to the manager and stating my intention over the phone, I was relieved when he agreed to meet me. Since the manager has decided to see me, it must mean that he's willing to give me a chance.

It was a weekend, so most people were taking the time to relax after a week of grinding.

I arranged to meet the manager at a high-end café because I wanted him to know how sincere I was in talking business. The particular establishment was quite popular in Avenport, so it was not easy to get seats there. I initially intended to meet with Chris

of Red Star at the same venue, but I never expected he would outright turn me down. Fortunately, I was able to make good use of the sought-after seats I reserved at the café.

However, after waiting for quite a while, I began to worry if the manager had decided to stand me up. He promised over the phone to see me. Has he changed his mind?

Just when I was about to give the manager a call, I saw a man in a suit enter the café. Immediately, I had a feeling that the man was the one I was waiting for, and sure enough, he started walking in my direction.

The manager then sat himself right across from me, so I had a good look at his face. He seemed to be in his thirties and had a polite demeanor.

“I apologize for being late, Ms. Garcia. The traffic was just terrible,” calmly explained the manager, Robert Downer.

“It’s fine. I’m more than grateful that you’re willing to meet me on a weekend. Waiting for an hour is no big deal, really.”

Robert seemed like an amicable person, and I appreciated that. Hopefully, the rest of our conversation will be just as effortless.

“I’m quite surprised to see someone as diligent and beautiful as you working on a weekend. I respect that,” praised Robert while looking sincerely at me.

“You’re too kind, Mr. Downer. Since you came here to talk business with me, I’d say that you’re quite diligent yourself. If

you didn't want to work today, you probably would've asked to meet on Monday.”

I could tell that Robert was dependable since he was willing to meet me for business on his day off. That alone was enough for the man to earn my respect.

“You sure know how to make a man blush, Ms. Garcia. Now, shall we talk business?” Smiling politely at me, Robert was ready to get to the nitty-gritty.

“Mr. Downer, I've brought with me a copy of the budget for your company. I know you're working with Joyful Success right now, and I also know just how good they are at what they do. But I believe our company is as capable as they are, if not better. In fact, we came up with an even smaller budget,” I explained to Robert as he went through the documents that I handed him.

Since Joyful Success was well-renowned, I had to work on cutting the budget in order to pique his interest. Michael's company brought Robert's huge profits, so all I had to do was help the home appliance company cut costs to gain even more profits.

Still, I knew some companies would insist on hiring Joyful Success because of their reputation. Therefore, I would have to figure out a different way to approach them. Once our company gains traction, I'm sure it'll be easier for me to poach their clients. There are many ways to go about this, and I'm going to prove that Michael isn't infallible.

Robert frowned slightly as he continued to flip through my documents. Not knowing what was going through the man's mind kept me on the edge of my seat.

“So, what do you think, Mr. Downer? Even though our company just started the local operation, we're well established overseas. You can rest assured that we'll get the job done right.” Seeing how Robert had remained silent for quite a while, I decided to say something to further convince him.

“Ms. Garcia, your company does seem like the right fit for us, but I'll have to see what you have planned for us in the later stages,” stated Robert calmly after setting down the papers in his hands.

I immediately jumped for joy on the inside when I heard the man because my intuition told me it was very likely that things were going to work out for me.

“Does that mean you'll hire our company, Mr. Downer?” I tried to sound as composed as possible, even though I was filled with excitement.

“Yes. I'm interested in working with your company, but it won't be long term, not at the moment anyway. After all, I still have yet to see your company's performance. If I'm satisfied with our business relationship after a year, I'll consider renewing our contract.”

Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 440

Word Travels Fast

Even though Robert had named conditions, I was still thrilled that he had agreed to work with our company. If nothing else, we at least got a one-year contract with his company.

“Fair enough. I promise we won’t let you down, Mr. Downer. My secretary and I will be at your office tomorrow. We can go over the details then.”

Since Robert was willing to give our company a chance, I had to strike while the iron was hot. As soon as his contract with Michael ends, I’ll have to get him to sign one with us.

“No problem.” He then glanced at me before continuing, “Ms. Garcia, aren’t you curious why I agreed to work with your company so readily?” questioned Robert with his smile still hanging on his face.

“Why is that?” I did wonder why he agreed to hire our company so quickly, but I just thought I was overthinking it. Since the man pointed it out, I was curious to find out the reason.

“I respect your dedication. As the director of your company, you could’ve had somebody else meet me, but that’s not what you did. It shows you’re a very responsible person and I can depend on you to get things done.”

Robert paid me yet another compliment for my eagerness, but I knew I only did what I did because I was desperate to consolidate myself.

Of course, I could not tell my potential client that, or I would risk getting myself into unwanted trouble.

“Thank you for your kind words and for putting your trust in me, Mr. Downer. All I can do is promise to live up to your expectation.”

Smiling at Robert, I suddenly felt hopeful. The meeting went better than I expected, which made me feel like I had gotten the better of Michael for once.

After chatting for a while and finishing up our coffee, we each went our own way.

All fired up because of the successful poaching, I started preparing for the next meeting with Robert as soon as I got home.

Meanwhile, Michael received news of my discussion with Robert not long after I had met the man.

That evening, after I was done compiling the documents for Robert, my doorbell rang. Curious, I hurried over to the front door with an eyebrow raised.

It turned out that Michael had come to visit. I could not help but be shocked to see the man since we had not seen each other for three days. My heart was racing as I gazed at him in surprise.

“Why are you here? Is there something you need?” I questioned with a slight frown.

Even though it was not unusual for companies to be poaching each other’s clients, I still felt somewhat guilty when Michael appeared at my doorstep.

“Is there a reason why you seem guilt-ridden?” inquired Michael as he looked into my eye.

“Why would I be guilt-ridden? I just don’t want to see you,” I said coldly, trying my best to sound as indifferent as possible.

“It seems I may have underestimated you. To be honest, I didn’t expect you to poach one of my clients so soon.”

Michael’s cold stare and sharp words got my heart beating even faster. So, this really is about me stealing his client! How did he even find out so soon? I just spoke with Mr. Downer today. Heck, we haven’t even signed a contract yet!

“Then maybe you shouldn’t have done that. I know just how capable you are, but I’m no pushover either. Working fast and hard is the only way to beat you.”

Even though the act of poaching was not exactly something to be proud of, it was, however, a norm in the business world. Just like nature itself, the strong would always survive.

Michael did not expect me to be so forthcoming. He glanced at me before walking into my living room uninvited.

I furrowed my eyebrows in response because I did not appreciate how the man acted as though he owned my apartment.

Then, I sat down across from him with my arms crossed to show him that he had overstayed his welcome.

“Did you just come here to tell me how I’ve poached your client? If that’s the case, you can go now because I’m well aware of what I did.”

There was not much for us to talk about since we were competitors, and I was not about to give his client back to him.

“In order to attract clients, you’re willing to reduce your profits. Do you really think that’s a smart move? Is that how you think you can win my clients over?” Michael seemed so composed it was almost impossible to tell if he was upset that his client got poached.

“How I win my clients over is none of your business.” To be honest, I was impressed that he even found out about the offer I made to Robert.

“You’re right. It’s none of my business. In fact, I can’t think of a reason to stop you from doing so. If you continue down this path long enough, you might even bankrupt the Nifty Group yourself,” sneered Michael condescendingly.

“What the heck does that mean?”

As much as his harsh words annoyed me, I could not help but feel a sense of insecurity after listening to him.

“Most companies would charge their clients the highest price the clients can afford to pay. On the other hand, you were willing to reduce your price and, in turn, increase your risk exposure. What if there is a change of plans or an unforeseen situation? Are you sure you’ll have enough to cover your costs without burning through your capital?” explained Michael in an icy-cold tone.

My heart almost skipped a beat when I heard the rhetorical question. Suddenly, I started to doubt myself. All I could think about was how to poach Michael's clients, which has prevented me from seeing the bigger picture. He's got a point. Maybe I was too desperate. As he said, if something were to happen, the low budget might not be enough to cover the extra costs. If worse comes to worst, our company might even have to pay out of our own pocket.

Although Michael made me feel anxious, I still tried my best to seem collected. Inside, I assured myself that everything was going to be fine, and he was just trying to mess with my head.