

Love from My Dominant Boss

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Regardless, my feelings of sympathy toward her did not make me hate her any less as I still remembered how she kept picking a fight with me.

Meanwhile, Michael kept me company every day in and out of work. Although the nature of our relationship was a thorn in both our sides, I was satisfied with what I had.

One day, Emma showed up in front of the office building the moment I came out. Judging by the way she was standing in my path, it didn't take a genius to figure out that she was here to cause trouble.

Michael had left the office early in the afternoon to discuss an important project, so Emma was obviously here for me.

"You're in my way, Ms. Jones," I said coldly with a frown.

"I think we really need to talk, Ms. Garcia."

Emma had the same old vicious look in her eyes when she looked at me, and that ruined her otherwise beautiful appearance.

"I don't think there's anything for us to talk about, Ms. Jones. You've stated your point twice now, and I believe I have made myself very clear as well. I suggest you stop wasting your time."

Emma's probably trying to threaten me into leaving Michael again, just like she did on both of our previous encounters, but I'm not about to give in to her threats!

Emma's eyes lit up with rage when she saw how stubborn I was. She then glanced behind me and broke into a sinister grin as she threatened me, "Ms. Garcia, are you sure you want to be talking about your affair with Mr. Shaw here where all of your colleagues can hear us? What would they think if they find out you're sleeping with your CEO?"

I got a little worried upon hearing that as I recalled how people treated me when they suspected me of having an affair with Michael.

"Ms. Jones, don't you get tired of resorting to threats all the time?"

I hated the feeling of being threatened, and this was the second time Emma had threatened me.

"I'm fine with it as long as it helps me get what I want. Let's talk over coffee, Ms. Garcia," Emma said with a smug grin that did nothing to hide the look of hatred in her eyes.

She then turned around and began walking toward a nearby café before I could say anything in protest.

As angry as I was, I had no choice but to do as told and sat down across in front of her at a table.

After a few minutes of sitting in silence, I was starting to lose my patience and said coldly, "How about you not waste both of our time and just say what you came to say?"

"I came to talk to you about Michael, of course. I'm sure you know very well what we did after I called you that night, Ms. Garcia. I'm Michael's official girlfriend, so I will be the one he marries in the future. Unless you want to be labeled as a homewrecker, I suggest you back off as soon as possible," Emma said.

And here I thought she would finally have something new to say... This is no different from what she said the other day!

"And what exactly did you two do, hmm, Ms. Jones? I really have no clue, so would you mind explaining it to me?" I asked with a sarcastic grin.

I knew she was going to tell me they had sex that night, but Michael had explained everything to me before this, so I wasn't going to believe her at all. In fact, I was even starting to suspect that her feeling unwell was all faked just to trick Michael into looking after her.

"We're all adults here, Ms. Garcia. Surely there's no need for me to explain the obvious?"

Emma was clearly triggered by what I said but maintained her smug facade anyway.

Holding back the urge to laugh at her, I pretended to have a sudden realization and looked at Anna in shock as I exclaimed, "Are you perhaps implying that you slept with Michael? Oh, my god! You two had sex?"

Because we were in a public area, I made sure to raise my voice on the part about having sex for emphasis. The surrounding people gave Emma weird

looks when they heard it, and I could see her fidgeting in her seat from embarrassment.

“Michael and I are a couple. What’s so strange about us having sex?”

Judging by the forced gleeful smile on her face, I figured she thought her words had hurt me deeply.

“Is that so? Funny, Michael told me he never laid a finger on you, and that he hates you a lot,” I said while casually taking a sip of my coffee.

Triggered by me exposing her lie, Emma lost her temper and threatened me again, “You... What the hell do you mean by that? I’ll have Michael fire you for talking in that tone with me, Anna!”

“You can go ahead and tell him to fire me right now if you think he’ll listen to you. Just don’t go crying when you realize you’re not as important to him as you think.”

Honestly, though, I couldn’t care less about Emma’s threats. I knew Michael very well, and he definitely wasn’t the type to be manipulated so easily.

After taking a deep breath to calm herself down, Emma stared me in the eye and said coldly, “Is this how you want to do it, Anna? You’re just dead-set on going against me, huh?”

“Ms. Jones, you’re the one who keeps trying to pick a fight with me. If you want to keep Michael by your side, then you should go talk to him instead of me!”

She’s making it seem like my fault after everything she’s done to me? How shameless and unreasonable can she get?

“Don’t blame me for being merciless, then. I’m not afraid of you simply because you’ve slept with Michael!” Emma shouted at me with a vicious look in her eyes, making no effort to hide her hostility whatsoever.

I lost my temper from her repeated threats and refused to back down either.

“Bring it on, then!”

Not wanting to give her a chance to respond, I stood up and stormed out of the café immediately after saying that.

Oh, my god! Emma is so unbelievably annoying! It's Michael who doesn't like her, and yet she's blaming it all on me instead! Well... Now that I think about it, I'd be a lot more surprised if Michael actually has feelings for someone like her...

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Michael was already home by the time I returned. He flashed me an unhappy look for coming home late and asked, "What took you so long? You finished work hours ago."

"Why don't you go ask your girlfriend?"

Emma's repeated harassments left me in a bad mood and even seeing Michael annoyed me greatly.

"Huh? What did Emma do to you?"

Michael frowned slightly in shock as he didn't expect us to know each other.

"What do you think? Of course she tried to threaten me into leaving you!"

I had been constantly threatened ever since I got into this relationship with Michael, and it was really getting on my nerves.

What annoyed me the most was how Emma kept picking a fight with me even though I never did anything to her. If she really wants to be with Michael that badly, she should be persuading him to break it off with me instead! What's the point of coming to me again and again?

Michael went silent after hearing what I said. Judging by how his expression had turned grim, I figured he didn't like what Emma did either as he hated others interfering in his affairs.

However, him being quiet angered me just as much. Emma only threatened me because of him, so he should at least say something about it.

"Mr. Shaw, you're the one who refused to end this relationship with me, so I hope your little girlfriend will stop harassing me because of it. I'm just trying to do my job and earn a living here."

Emma's threat to expose my relationship with Michael to everyone in the office left me somewhat concerned as I wouldn't be able to continue working there if that happened.

Michael frowned at me in response and said coldly, "I hate it when women unrelated to me meddle in my affairs. Don't worry, Anna, I'll take care of this!"

I felt a lot more relieved after hearing that. Emma isn't afraid of me, but that doesn't mean she isn't afraid of Michael. There's no way she'd dare anger a guy she's trying to be with!

Michael headed over to the balcony with his phone in hand while I prepared dinner in the kitchen. He was emanating an icy-cold aura all over, and I could tell he was furious after our conversation earlier.

Unable to help my curiosity, I strained my ears to eavesdrop on their conversation.

"Emma, don't you think you're crossing the line here? How dare you meddle in my personal affairs?"

Of course, I could only hear what Michael said from where I stood.

"Listen, this is just an arrangement made by our families. I am not interested in you at all, got it? Don't let me catch you meddling in my personal affairs ever again, or there'll be hell to pay!"

Michael had always been a very cold person and never held back toward people he didn't like, even if that person was his gorgeous girlfriend.

Watching Emma's threats and vicious attitude disappear completely as she submitted to Michael's nasty outburst had me feeling incredibly satisfied.

Michael hung up the phone after dropping a couple more warnings and returned to the living room with a cold look on his face.

"Michael, aren't you afraid of angering Emma by talking to her like that? She is still your girlfriend, after all..." I spoke up eventually after staring at him in silence for quite a while.

I couldn't bring myself to understand why Michael wouldn't deny her being his girlfriend if he didn't like her at all.

He claims it's an arrangement that his family made, but... Given how domineering and stubborn Michael is, I doubt anyone would be able to force him into anything!

“Do you think I give a damn what she feels? You mean a lot more to me than she does!”

Although Michael said that to emphasize how little Emma mattered to him, I couldn't help but shudder at the last sentence he said and found myself staring blankly at him from behind.

Do I really matter to him? Even just a little?

After what seemed like forever, I regained my composure and was about to say something to him, but held my tongue in the end. No, it's probably just wishful thinking on my part... I mean, Michael caring about me? Pfft...

That night, I couldn't seem to fall asleep no matter how much I tossed and turned in bed. My mind was all over the place, and I had a lot of questions that I dreaded getting disappointing answers for.

Right as I was going crazy from my thoughts, Michael turned around to face me and began running his hand all over my body.

His eyes were closed, but I could tell exactly what he wanted to do.

I used to wear pajamas to bed every night, but that habit changed ever since I got into a relationship with Michael. He insisted that I sleep in the nude every night as he found it troublesome to take my clothes off every time he felt like having sex.

Having no mood for sex at all, I frowned in annoyance as he fondled my breasts with those huge hands of his. Regardless, I knew how passionate Michael was about intercourse and didn't want to anger him by rejecting his advances.

I wasn't sure where he got his moves from, but he always had a way of getting me aroused even when I didn't feel like having sex.

That was probably why I could never escape his clutches whenever he wanted to do it.

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Wave after wave of pleasure crashed into me in yet another wild night of passion.

Michael fully satisfied himself before he rolled off and pulled me tightly into his embrace.

Although he was the one doing all the hard work, the way he constantly adjusted my position to cater to him had already left me sufficiently worn out. So I closed my eyes, and I let him keep me there.

It occurred to me then that this time, I forgot about the pills.

Perhaps Michael's threats had taken effect, the next few days saw no further movement from Emma and passed without incident. Without her getting on my case, I felt a little more at ease.

After Ronan's confession the last time, I was a little reluctant to pick up when he called today. But since I had agreed for us to continue as friends, I sucked it up and answered.

"Finally, Anna. I thought you were really going to ignore me," Ronan said, his voice from the other end full of hurt.

"Why would I when I've promised not to avoid you the last time? I was just a little tied up a moment ago." I let out an awkward laugh as I cooked up something on the fly. "Is there something you need from me? 'Cause I'm at work right now."

I was worried that Ronan might ask me out for a meal or the likes, so I used work as a deterrent before he could suggest anything else.

"Why am I calling? Cause I missed you, of course. And tonight, I'd like to introduce you to someone," he said, still wanting to meet up as though he had not gotten the hint.

"But I'm afraid I won't have the time to. Lots of work to catch up with. How about next time?"

As it was only quite recently that he confessed his feelings for me, I did not feel comfortable seeing him again so soon, and considering his personality, he might also start saying something inappropriate.

"Are you turning me down here, Anna? Making excuses even when you said that you won't? I'm really upset, Anna."

Ronan may like to goof around, but he had a mind like a steel trap.

"Alright, alright. Let's meet in the afternoon then."

Knowing that I would not be able to wriggle out of this, I eventually gave in and that made Ronan audibly pleased. I then took care to remind him not to run his mouth before I hung up.

He was actually a pretty nice guy, but I could not have him taking a liking to me as we could never be together.

After work, he texted me the address to a restaurant, which took a long ride on the subway to reach.

I was positively astounded when I arrived at the place he mentioned; as compared to the Jetroinian restaurant we last visited together, this one could very well be a five-star establishment.

That profligate fella must have had too much cash to spare, choosing to dine at a posh place like this.

Coming up to the door of the private room marked 1101, I pushed my way through. Being in such a high-end restaurant for the first time really made me nervous, as this was a place better suited for the affluent than peasants like me.

I had barely even taken a step when Ronan popped out to pull me inside.

“At long last, Anna. Come, let me introduce you to my cousin, the famous business whiz kid, Michael Shaw.”

I shuddered when I heard that name, and became dumbstruck when my gaze fell upon Michael’s face.

Michael...

Learning that he was the cousin that Ronan had been talking about was disconcerting as the two of them could not have been more different from each other.

There was a glint of astonishment across Michael’s eyes when he first saw me before his handsome face cooled off. I bet that he was not expecting for me to be that person Ronan wanted to introduce him to either.

“What’s wrong, Anna?”

Ronan frowned when he saw me staring at Michael and seemed a little concerned.

“I’m fine. It’s nothing...”

I withdrew from making eye contact with Michael when Ronan sat me across from him, as his icy gaze threatened to pierce right through me. Ronan then proceeded to take his own place beside me.

“What do you think, Michael? Isn’t she gorgeous?”

The chirpy man was primarily focused on Michael, seemingly oblivious to the awkwardness between Michael and myself.

“Yeah, she is. You’re pretty capable now, aren’t you, Ronan? Trying to poach my people?”

Michael glanced at me before he tossed back and emptied his wineglass without a sliver of emotion.

His words took me aback and had my heart thumping against my chest. Did he mean to tell Ronan about us?

I looked upon his inscrutable expression with apprehensiveness and anticipation, quietly hoping for him to not keep our relationship a secret any longer.

“Whatever do you mean by that, Michael? Do you two know each other?”

Ronan’s eyes flitted between Michael and myself, looking quite perplexed, while I kept my head low and awaited Michael’s response.

“She works in my design department,” Michael said blandly after taking another glance at me and sounded very distant.

Lifting my head to him, I tried to hide my disappointment as that was not the sort of response I was looking forward to.

“So you work at Joyful Success. What an amazing coincidence.”

Upon hearing Michael’s answer, Ronan smiled a little and appeared more relaxed compared to when he heard the former’s previous comment.

“Yeah. I’ve never heard you mention that Mr. Shaw’s your cousin before,” I said while I eked out a smile. There was no way that I would have shown up here had I known how they were related beforehand.

Heaven forbid. The two of them, cousins? How could such a coincidence even exist in this world? I must have been jinxed to even chance upon something like this.

In the meantime, the look in Michael's eyes intimated that he might skin me alive, so I was sure that some punishment would be in order when I got home at night.

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"I had no idea that you've been working at Michael's company cause I'd have told you about him and also asked him to look out for you otherwise."

Ronan did not notice the unnaturalness in my inflection, and even if he did, he would have thought that I was just being reserved in Michael's presence.

"No... That won't be necessary. It'll be better if Mr. Shaw treated me just like everyone else," I cleared my throat and replied in a small voice.

The way things stood, I would have no more freedom to speak of had Michael tried any harder to "take care of me."

"Rest assured that she is in good hands. Never knew that you are friends with Ronan, Ms. Garcia. This is truly unexpected."

Michael turned his attention onto me. Even under his even tone, I could sense his repressed rage.

"It was just happenstance that we became acquainted."

I bowed my head as I dreaded to meet his eyes, and silently prayed for some magnanimity from the petty Michael, who would surely blow his top when we got back—a profoundly worrying prospect, as far as I was concerned.

"Happenstance? Perhaps you should be more careful around Ronan because he's a notorious ladies' man."

Michael's searching eyes had me wondering what exactly he was implying, but regardless, I knew for certain that he would be upset.

"Hey, could you not ramble on about stuff like that in front of Anna? I've already left that old life behind and decided that she will be my one true love."

Oh God, could you please just shut the hell up! Are you trying to get me into trouble, blabbering away like that in front of Michael? Ronan's swift protestations against Michael calling him out gave me the urge to smack some sense into him.

"Do you like her and wish to be with her?"

Though not addressing me directly, Michael's eyes were riveted upon my face the entire time. His gaze was as chilling as swords aimed right at me.

Damn you, Ronan. Did you honestly forget everything I told you over the phone? All thanks to you, my life might be over soon.

"Of course. Anna's the first woman who has ever made me feel this way, so I wish to court her and be with her, and... Ah!"

Seeing that he was going to blabber on and on, I pinched him out of anger. It would likely be on him should I get killed tonight.

"What's that for? I'm not done talking yet!"

Ronan glared at me indignantly and sounded quite displeased.

"Shut up, Ronan. You're going to get me into deep sh*t!" I seethed through my teeth when I saw from the look on his face that he was not going to let up.

There was a shift in Michael's mood throughout the interaction between Ronan and myself. His expression turned increasingly frosty, and I could distinctly feel the temperature in the surrounding air nosedive.

I lifted my head only to see Michael's burning eyes regarding me intently.

"Don't listen to him, Mr. Shaw. It's nothing like that, 'cause we're just friends."

Worried that Michael would misunderstand the relationship between Ronan and myself, I promptly offered up an explanation in a bid to avoid an unenviable fate.

Placed under the scrutiny of the wordless Michael, his dark demeanor had me jittery.

"Can't you cut me some slack in front of my cousin, Anna? That's a pretty vicious thing to say to a dashing charmer like myself."

Not expecting such candor from me, Ronan looked rather aggrieved.

Why would a woman on the verge of her own demise bother to salvage his self-esteem? His mouthiness would be my ruin.

I should have consulted my horoscope before leaving home today, as my agreeing to meet with Ronan must go down as the most lamentable decision ever.

“Would you believe that I would break off our friendship if you continue to speak like this, Ronan Moore?” I threatened under my breath as I glared at him. I must be out of my mind to have a friend like him who would sooner or later be the end of me.

The aggrieved Ronan clammed up immediately at my strong-arm tactic.

“Did you mean it, Ronan?” Michael asked as he turned his attention to his cousin. His voice was so deep and low that no emotions could be inferred from it.

“Of course. Was bringing her to you not proof enough of my sincerity?” Ronan assented to Michael’s queries promptly and without hesitation.

That Ronan had me exhaling in exasperation.

“I’d like to visit the restroom.”

Not wishing to continue to face Michael’s cold stare, I made up an excuse to step away.

While I looked into the mirror at the dour face staring back at me and imagined what Michael might do when I got home, I could not help but feel sorry for myself.

But seriously though, how could Michael and Ronan be related? I simply could not identify any smidgen of resemblance between the two.

Michael was standing outside when I walked out of the restroom. His sudden appearance made my heart skip a beat and filled me with dread.

“Um... What are you doing here?” My eyes were transfixed upon him for some time before I asked meekly.

“I should be the one doing the asking, Anna Garcia. What’s up with you and Ronan?”

To my trepidation, Michael regarded me with a darkened expression and fury stoking within his eyes, so I hastened to explain myself while I averted eye contact.

“We met at the hospital, but it’s not what you think. Ronan has always been frivolous, so you can’t really take what he says at face value!”

Michael was not going to let this slide, so if he were to come after me tonight, I would never forgive Ronan for it.

“Didn’t I tell you not to get close to any guy apart from myself? Are you ignoring what I told you?”

When Michael leaned in reproachfully, that was how I knew for certain that he was bothered by my relationship with Ronan.

“We’re just casual acquaintances. Can’t I even have any male friends?”

I took two steps back and looked upon Michael with a frown.

This man was becoming increasingly unreasonable. I had already promised not to date anyone else until our relationship was over, but surely he couldn’t possibly disallow me from making friends, right? Was wanting to have a social life too much to ask?

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“Casual acquaintances? I’ve never seen that guy getting serious with any woman before,” Michael snorted and would not even listen.

“You can take it however you like, but we should get back before your cousin gets suspicious of us.”

There was little else I could say to convince him of my innocence, but I was not in the opinion that I am in need of vindication.

Michael was brooding and looked as though he had something else to say, but I had already stepped around him and made my exit.

He had always been distrustful of me and never once did accept my explanations. How could I have a relationship with any other man when he was the only one who consumed my entire being?

He never understood my feelings and probably did not care even if he did.

We returned to the private room where Ronan was fiddling with his phone, one after the other. Seeing how we came back in at almost the same time

had him appearing a little quizzical before he broke into a smile once more.

“What took you both so long? Don’t tell me that you’ve taken a fancy to Anna?” The cynical Ronan teased.

“Would you give her up if I did?” Michael asked, seemingly in earnest.

Ronan’s eyes widened, and his expression stiffened in some incredulity. Even I trembled inside as neither of us anticipated that particular response.

“Just kidding. As you may know, we don’t share the same taste,” the atmosphere turned awkward before Michael diffused it with a chuckle.

“You nearly had me there for a moment, but honestly, I wouldn’t fight with you over her if it were true, though.”

Ronan relaxed and recovered the smile on his face when he realized that Michael was only pulling his leg.

“Really? I think you’d be quite reluctant should that really happen one day.”

The grin faded from Michael’s lips as he regarded Ronan meaningfully.

What Michael told Ronan had me on an edge. They were relatives, and with my current relationship with Michael, I am a little at a loss for how to deal with both of them.

“Alright, enough on this subject. We should tuck in before the food turns cold.”

There was a subtle shift in Ronan’s expression as he let out a slight smile and tried to change the subject.

Still sitting across from Michael who was dining elegantly, I had conversely no appetite whatsoever.

Though unsure as to how I should navigate my relationship with the two men, I was certain that I did not want to be caught between them.

The meal ended amidst a suffocating ambiance for me. Ronan offered to drive me home afterward and bundled me into his car without giving me an opportunity to turn him down.

Meanwhile, Michael glanced over once and made no comment before he drove off on his own.

“Could you not do that next time, Ronan? I’ve already made it clear the last time that we’re only going to be friends, and nothing more. So why did you have to say those things in front of Michael?”

Ronan seemed to be in a fine mood as he drove along, but I was pissed as hell.

“You did turn me down, but I didn’t declare that I was going to give up. And with my charms, who knows whether you might change your mind one day. I’m not convinced that you wouldn’t be moved after we’ve spent more time together.”

As though the rebuke in my tone eluded him, Ronan remained as confident as ever that I would inevitably gravitate toward him.

Speechless at his self-conceit, I wonder what it would take to inject some sensibility into this guy.

“What you said today could become very problematic for me. Michael must be very upset, and things could get rough for me at work.”

I breathed out haplessly. Michael’s anger stemmed from his misunderstanding of my relationship with Ronan, but considering that I was unable to reveal the nature of our relationship, I could only cite potential issues of a professional kind.

“Why are you being so pessimistic? The company belongs to Michael, so if I was to woo you, he’d be more likely to help than to make things difficult for you.”

Those words of his made me want to smash my own head into the wall. Ugh, you dumb*ss! How could Michael possibly want to help you? If Ronan found out about Michael and myself, I was sure he would not have felt that way.

My wish was to get Ronan to keep his distance, but I did not know how to go about expressing that, as the option of telling him about his cousin and myself outright was completely off the table.

I sighed and said no more. Whatever happens, happens. There was no point in thinking that far ahead.

Ronan did intend to see me all the way to Birchwood, but I implored him to drop me off at a bus stop instead. Honestly, I would be totally done for if Michael saw that I allowed for it.

As unwilling as he was, Ronan nonetheless complied as he was unable to get around my stubbornness.

Arriving under my block made me a little afraid to head upstairs because the illuminated lights to my unit meant that Michael was definitely home. I was tempted to flee out of certainty that nothing good awaited me there.

At this moment, my cellphone snapped me out of my thoughts. Fishing it out, I panicked when I saw that the animated name was Michael's, and it took me several deep breaths to settle myself enough to answer the call.

"Hey."

"You've two minutes to get up here. Or else!"

Hearing the iciness in his inflection tells me that he already knew that I was downstairs.

My heart stopped as I began to mourn for myself, as I inferred from his tone his murderous intent.

Initially, I thought about saying a few words over the phone in appeasement, but the line went dead before I could have said anything.

Twitching my lips, I slid the phone back into my bag before I hurried along.

I could not afford to exceed Michael's two-minute allowance and was practically sprinting while I kept track of the timing on my watch. Owing to the considerable wait for the elevator, I finally gave up and took to the stairs.

Huffing and puffing by the time I passed through the door, I wished that I could just sit my ass down there and then.

I ran like I had never run before, and the speed at which I moved could have seen a first-place finish in a hundred-meter sprint.

Heaving, I saw Michael seated on the couch, aloof as ever upon witnessing my entry.

"You're twenty-eight seconds behind," he said humorlessly.

"It's just a little slower, but I've already come up as quickly as I could."

