

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 291

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Chapter 291 A Loaded Apology

Michael stared at me, frowning at my somber mood. He asked gently, "What's wrong? Why are you suddenly upset?"

He stared at me in concern. Faced with his piercing gaze, I found myself at a loss for words.

I hesitated about recounting my confrontation with Josephine to Michael. I had no idea how he would react and I did not wish to add to his worries.

"Nothing's wrong. The weather's been so hot lately that it's making me uncomfortable. I'll be right as rain after some rest." I forced a smile on my face and immediately evaded his eye contact.

He saw straight through my weak excuse and asked seriously, "Do you think I would fall for that? Anna, don't lie to me. What happened?"

"I-I... Mrs. Shaw approached me today."

I eventually succumbed to his request after some hesitation. Honesty is the best policy. I did not want to keep things from him and cause a rift between us in the future.

Michael's expression hardened as I told him what had happened. When I finished recounting my experience, he looked downright hostile.

His anger was palpable, yet my insecurities flared their ugly heads as I wondered if he was furious at his mother for driving a wedge through our relationship or if he was annoyed that I was being a tattletale.

My anxiety peaked at Michael's prolonged silence, and I immediately offered an apology. "I'm sorry, I-

"Don't take anything she says to heart," he said simply before turning his attention back to dinner.

I was perplexed. Is this his way of comforting me?

Michael's firm reply did little to soothe my fraught nerves. She's his mom, after all. I can't bring myself to care less about her words.

He was exhausted enough as it is, and it would be thoughtless of me to add to his burdens. Josephine's appearance was frustrating, but I believed that with time, her impression of me would improve.

After dinner, I cleared the table while Michael headed off to the balcony to make a phone call.

"All right, I'll see you in half an hour."

That was the first thing I heard when I came out of the kitchen after doing the dishes.

I stared at Michael and wondered who he had been on the phone with.

"I'm going out for a while. You should catch an early night's rest." He seemed to avoid my gaze as he said this.

It was far too late at night for him to be working on company matters. Despite my suspicions, I swallowed the question on the tip of my tongue. I did not want to pry into every single one of his matters.

"Okay. Don't come home too late." I smiled at him and pretended I was not dying to know who he was meeting at this hour.

Michael nodded wordlessly and headed for the coat rack near the door. He grabbed a jacket and left.

The house suddenly felt a lot quieter without him in it. Though we had only been living together for a few days, my dependence on Michael had grown considerably. I did not know if I could bring myself to leave him again.

Bored, I sat on the living room couch and watched a sitcom distractedly.

I was about to expire from boredom when my phone began ringing. My heart sank when I saw that it was my mom calling.

She had not contacted me in over a month. This out-of-the-blue phone call can't be good news.

I answered the phone resignedly.

"Mom," I greeted her once the line connected.

"Anna, what are you doing? You haven't called me in ages." My mom sounded unusually caring on the other end of the phone. It was a stark contrast to her characteristic demanding self.

I wondered if something was wrong with my hearing. Did I hear her right? She's never treated me like this.

Sometimes, I thought that my mind was a bit messed up. I tended to expect the worst whenever my mom was acting nicely toward me.

"Mom, why did you call me today?" I asked warily, trying to ignore the sinking feeling in my chest.

"Oh, nothing much. I just missed you since you haven't visited Dad and me for a while. You should visit us tonight if you're free. We're heading back to the village in a couple of days," she said warmly. Her claims of missing me, however, raised my suspicions. I knew her personality; she would never say such things.

Despite knowing that she probably did not mean her words, I was still delighted at her display of concern. I longed for my mom's love more than anything else in this world.

"Okay, I'll be over in a bit."

We ended our last meeting on bad terms and I did harbor some resentment toward my mom. Still, she had taken the initiative to call me and extend an olive branch, so I believed it was my duty as a daughter to forgive and forget.

I checked the time and realized it was barely nine at night. Since I had no idea when Michael would come home, I decided to head over to my mom's.

When I arrived at her place, I took a deep breath to calm myself before knocking on the door. I had not seen her in over a month and did not know what to expect.

My hand had barely left the door knocker when it was opened from the inside by my mom, who practically dragged me into the house.

"Anna, you're here! Come in and take a seat." My mom held my hand as she invited me into the house.

Faced with her unprecedented display of affection, my suspicions grew. Mom's acting really weird today.

"Mom, did you call me here for something?"

It was increasingly difficult to believe that my mom invited me here simply because she missed me. I recalled all the times Mom had reached out to me in the past and failed to pinpoint an occasion during which she did not

require my help with something. When things were nice and calm, she had always gone radio silent.

“Of course not, dear. I called you to have a chat with you. You haven’t come by to see me or call me in such a long time—are you still mad at me over our last meeting?” Mom looked at me like she had been unfairly maligned.

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Chapter 292 A Lucrative Marriage

Mom’s caring demeanor was everything I had ever imagined. Now that she was finally showing affection for me, the situation somehow felt too good to be true. What’s wrong with me? I can’t help but think that something’s about to go wrong when she’s nice to me.

“Mom, you’re overthinking. So many things have been happening lately and I’ve simply been too busy to find the time to visit you.”

My words belied the resentment I felt toward my mom. I could not, however, bring myself to voice my resentment when faced with her sensitive question.

“Anna, I know how you’re feeling. It was entirely my fault last time. I’m sorry I didn’t stop to consider your feelings.” She even kept her head lowered for good measure, looking like she was deeply regretful over her actions.

I looked at Mom in shock. She never used to apologize, even if she was at fault. What the heck is going on? Have I entered some alternate universe where my mom actually isn’t a selfish person? I can’t believe she’s saying “sorry” to me right now!

I did not know what to think of my mom’s sudden change in behavior, though her apology went a long way in dispelling the grudge I felt toward her.

“Mom, it’s all in the past now. We don’t have to bring it up again.”

My statement was not a decision to forgive and forget each of my mom’s past transgressions. I merely did not want to be reminded of how badly she had hurt me in the past.

"All right, I won't bring it up in the future," Mom said in response.

Just then, Steven approached us with a cup of freshly-brewed tea in hand.

"Anna, have some tea." He looked at me woodenly, a marked improvement from his usual hostility.

I noticed that he had limped into the living room. It was, however, a good sign that he was longer in a wheelchair or crutches. He should recover fully in no time.

"Your legs seem to be healing well," I remarked as my gaze landed on Steven's legs, relieved at the pace of his recovery.

"I went to the hospital for a checkup and the doctor said that it was recovering well. Besides, I'm still young. With proper rest and rehabilitation, my legs will be good as new."

Steven no longer seemed enraged by my presence like before. In fact, he seemed to have matured a great deal, though I remained wary about his improved demeanor.

"That's great! Once you've fully recovered, you can focus on looking for a job. Please stop gambling, or you might not be as lucky the next time around."

He had gotten both his legs broken due to his gambling debts. I was worried that he would go back to the gambling dens again once he was better.

"I know. I'll look for a job soon. Don't worry, Anna," he replied calmly.

Steven would have argued with me in the past instead of obediently accepting my advice; I would not have put it past him to blame me for his broken legs as well. His behavior today, however, struck me dumb. Has he finally come to his senses?

"Anna, are you marrying Michael Shaw soon?" Mom suddenly piqued up and shifted the conversation topic to my impending wedding. An inexplicable feeling flashed through my heart.

I did not want to mention anything to do with Michael in front of my mom, precisely because she viewed him as a cash cow.

It was bad enough that Josephine saw me as a gold-digger. If my mom chimed in with unreasonable requests, it would only serve to affirm

Josephine's assumptions and place my relationship with Michael in an even more negative light.

"We're still preparing for our wedding but we're down to the final details," I uttered hesitantly.

Nonetheless, no amount of concern justified keeping news of my wedding from my parents. I had to tell them eventually. I prayed fervently for their genuine blessings.

"I knew from the beginning that you had feelings for Michael. I'm so happy that you're finally marrying each other. His family background is impeccable. We must've struck the lottery to have a daughter marrying into such a wealthy family."

Mom was elated at the news of my wedding. She must be imagining how wonderful her future is going to be.

I could not explain why, but her excitement dampened my mood. Her invitation today could not possibly be for just a heart-to-heart talk.

"Mom, I'm marrying Michael because we love each other. It has nothing to do with his wealth." I frowned, not bothering to hide my displeasure.

Even if Michael was the poorest man in the world, I would choose him out of love.

Our relationship would be less stressful if he was an average worker instead of some business bigshot in Avenport.

I was subtly hinting at Mom to drop her plans of touching Michael's money. It was rather crude to call her out on her greediness, so I could only hope that she caught my hint.

"I understand; you've always been such a sensible and considerate girl. Still, it must be better to marry a rich man than a poor one."

Alas, Mom's excitement showed no signs of dampening.

I sighed in resignation, confident that my mom had summoned me here today to confirm that I was marrying Michael. She must be calculating all the benefits she can derive from her future association with someone as rich as Michael.

"Before I forget, you should help Steven out once he's recovered and looks for a job. He shouldn't be working too strenuously on account of his leg."

My silence tipped Mom off about my wish to stop discussing Michael. She immediately changed the topic to Steven's job search.

Frankly, I was not leaping at the opportunity to help him find a job. I was sick of solving his problems since our childhood. Besides, his work ethics were questionable at best. Even if I got him a job, there was no guarantee that he would repay my kindness with hard work.

I eyed his legs and was being indecisive. I could not deny that Steven seemed more sensible than before. Perhaps he has finally learned his lesson.

Eventually, I succumbed to my mom's request. "All right, I'll keep an eye out for some job opportunities and let Steven know."

Dad and Mom would come to rely on my brother's income for a living sooner or later. I could not care for them my whole life, after all. If Steven made an honest living, it would lessen all our burdens.

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Chapter 293 Betrothal Gift

"Thank you, Anna."

Upon seeing that I had agreed, Steven regarded me in surprise and thanked me for the very first time.

"Anna, you and Michael are going to be married soon, and a betrothal gift is customary in our village. Have you discussed this with him?"

The atmosphere had eased. However, the attention landed on Michael and me when my mother brought up the matter of money.

According to the wedding traditions in our village, the groom had to give a betrothal gift. I didn't want things to be so traditional between Michael and me. After all, we were together because we loved each other, and it had nothing to do with a dowry.

My brows furrowed slightly, but I didn't respond to my mother's question. In truth, I said nothing to Michael since I had no desire to receive one.

Naturally, he could fork out tens of thousands, considering his status. I couldn't shake off the feeling that I'm selling myself off if I were to ask him for a betrothal gift. And I didn't like that feeling.

My mother knew from my silence that I hadn't said a single word to Michael about the matter. All at once, she grew chagrined.

"Don't tell me you've never brought that up with him? A betrothal gift from the groom is customary in our village, so you can't disregard the tradition."

While saying that, her voice sounded a tad urgent, and the look in her eyes was anxious as she stared at me.

"Mom, is it important? Michael and I love each other. The wedding will proceed with or without the betrothal gift."

Despite my mom's determination to have her way, I just couldn't bring myself to agree to her demand. Michael had already spent hundreds of thousands on my family, which was several times the amount of a betrothal gift.

"So, you don't plan on making him pay, huh? You haven't even married him, yet you're scrimping on his behalf. Have you forgotten the hardships your father and I faced to raise you? It's only right for Michael to show his appreciation."

My mother was obviously irked and she wasn't mincing her words.

Every time she spoke in such a manner, I found her unreasonable. Even now, I felt rather irritated, for I loathed how money-minded she was.

"Mom--"

"I don't care! If you want to marry Michael, a betrothal gift is indispensable. Besides, parents from both parties should at least meet before the ceremony, no? You failed to observe the basic courtesy."

I initially wanted to argue, but my mother gave me no opportunity to say a single word. She would cut me off unceremoniously whenever I was about to speak.

Only then did I realize her motive for calling me home that night was to talk about the wedding.

The lack of genuine concern from my own mother hit me even though I had long since grown accustomed to it.

Mom is right about one thing. Michael and I are getting married. He should meet my parents regardless of the gap in our statuses.

“How about this, Mom? I’ll arrange for Michael to meet you both in a few days when he’s not so busy with work.”

I finally relented at my mother’s perpetual wrath and concurred to have Michael meet them. Nonetheless, I would never agree to a dowry.

“I don’t trust you. Give me Michael’s number, and I’ll phone him myself.”

I had already acceded, but she was persistent about the matter, worried that I was merely brushing her off.

“Mom, I don’t think that’s appropriate.”

She left a bad impression on him back then. I’m truly worried that he’ll immediately rebuff her when she expresses her wish to meet him. After all, there’s nothing he won’t do.

“Are you still my daughter, Anna Garcia? I want to meet my future son-in-law, yet I’ve got to adhere to your arrangement and wait until you’ve set a date? I’m your mother and his future mother-in-law, you know?”

My mother shot to her feet and glared at me furiously.

I couldn’t bring myself to aggravate her further. In the end, I capitulated and scrolled through my contacts for Michael’s number.

Satisfied, she took my phone and entered Michael’s number into her contacts.

A wave of regret washed over me. Maybe I shouldn’t have given in just now. If Mom calls him every other day, he’ll certainly be annoyed. Then, a conflict might break out between the two of us.

There was nothing much to say once I knew my mom’s motive. Soon, I left.

It wasn’t that late, and I wasn’t in a hurry to go home. I wandered on the streets because Michael was definitely still out at this hour.

After all, he would ring me up right away if he didn’t see me when he returned home.

As I walked aimlessly, I caught sight of a familiar car parked at the entrance of a high-end restaurant. The two people who subsequently alighted had my eyes almost instantly popping out of my head.

When Michael and Emma appeared in my line of sight in concert, my heart ached badly.

Michael walked ahead toward the restaurant while Emma followed behind him. She quickly caught up to him and took his arm.

Agony welled in me as though someone had stabbed me in the heart. My legs felt as though they were shackled to the ground, and I couldn't move a single step.

I wanted to rush forward to confront Michael about being with Emma at such an hour and having dinner together when they had already broken up.

Countless questions and stark panic assailed me in a flurry. Clutching my throbbing head with both hands, I couldn't make sense of what was going on.

I was a relatively sensitive person. Seeing Michael and Emma together brought me tremendous distress.

I stood by the curb for eons and merely stared at the entrance of the restaurant. I didn't leave, nor did I enter the premises to see what they were doing.

Like a fool, I waited for them to come out.

As I stood there, every single second was torture for me. My imagination went wild with speculations about their relationship then. He detests her, but he's having dinner with her late at night. They even came in the same car!

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Chapter 294 A Sense Of Disquiet

I really couldn't understand why Michael would do such a thing.

Time ticked by, and the two of them finally exited the restaurant about a little over an hour later.

Emma looked blissful as she took Michael's arm while he remained expressionless. I couldn't read his mind.

The duo climbed into the car and drove off. However, they weren't heading toward Birchwood.

Watching as his car drove further away, I sprinted after him for a short distance. Alas, a human was no match for a car.

The corners of my mouth curved into a bitter smile.

Was my happiness a mere illusion? Does he really love me?

I started making my way home forlornly. Vivid images of them together kept replaying in my mind. A burning desire to know exactly why they were meeting each other seized me.

After what seemed like hours, I halted in my tracks and rummaged out my phone to call Michael.

It rang for an eternity before his alluring and low voice drifted out from the other end of the phone. "What's the matter? Are you not in bed yet?"

His voice was still as gentle as ever, and I couldn't hear anything different at all. The calmer he sounded, the deeper I fell into the icy abyss.

"Where are you right now?"

Suppressing the tremor in my voice, I did my utmost best to sound calm and collected.

"I just finished dinner with a client. I'll be home in no time. Rest earlier if you're tired. You don't need to wait up."

Michael's voice turned all the more tender, and I could even imagine a faint smile on his face.

He's so very handsome when he smiles. It's mesmerizing. If I hadn't seen him with Emma tonight, I would be moved by his tenderness. Now, however, I merely feel pain.

"Okay. I'll be hanging up, then."

I couldn't quite hold my emotions back, so I hurriedly hung up before tears escaped my eyes.

For a brief moment, I had the impulse to confront Michael. I wanted to hear his explanation, yet I was afraid of the repercussion.

I was hoping that he'd take the initiative to come clean with me. From the look of things now, that is just wishful thinking on my part!

When I arrived home over an hour later, Michael still wasn't back. Despite having no inkling of where he went with Emma or what they did, I didn't dare mull it over either.

My worst fear might turn out to be true. Emma was an exceedingly beautiful woman, and she outshone me by far.

Besides, Michael had been restraining himself because I was pregnant. I was truly afraid that he couldn't control himself and hooked up with her.

Another thirty minutes passed before he finally came home, looking a tad tired. I could smell the stench of alcohol on him. Nonetheless, he wasn't inebriated.

When he stepped into the house, I merely threw him a placid glance because I didn't quite know what to say right then.

"Didn't I tell you not to wait up?"

Michael came over to me. Upon seeing that I was still awake, he cradled my face to kiss me.

In the past, I would never reject him. However, my mind was running amok with tons of questions—what did they do; did he kiss her?

Turning my face to the side, I dodged his kiss. At that very moment, my expression was cold and devoid of emotion.

Michael's brows furrowed in displeasure, and his gaze was tinged with disgruntlement as he eyed me.

"I'm tired. I'm going back to the room to sleep first."

I would frantically explain myself when confronted by his chagrined gaze, but I didn't want to say a single word to him right then.

I headed toward the bedroom without even sparing him a glance.

The crease of Michael's brows deepened. His eyes remained fixated on my back as I entered the bedroom, seemingly contemplating something or other.

Once on the bed, I stared at the ceiling blankly. My mind was filled with images of Michael with Emma together. I wondered if he had regretted choosing me over Emma or whether they rendezvous at her house or hotel.

The more I brood about it, the greater the torment that coursed through me. Clutching the covers tightly with both hands, I couldn't help hammering my head a few times to force myself to stop thinking about it.

Soon, the creak from the opening door pierced the room as Michael came in. When I heard his footsteps, I immediately closed my eyes and feigned sleep. I really didn't know how to face him right then.

After taking a shower, he lay down next to me.

Silence reigned for a long time. I thought he had already fallen asleep. As I grew increasingly galled, I turned and gave my back to him, sulking alone.

"Are you in a bad mood tonight?" At that precise moment, Michael spoke out of the blue. His voice was mild, betraying none of his emotions.

I opened my eyes and stared straight ahead silently. Hmph! He didn't tell me the truth on the phone previously, so I've got nothing to say to him now!

Closing my eyes, I forced myself to go to sleep and forget about the man beside me.

Michael likewise turned to his side and hugged me around the waist from behind. It was his favorite position. I loved the feeling of being hugged by him, too. But at that very moment, I couldn't help the aversion within me.

I took his hands away and inched closer to the edge of the bed to keep a distance from him.

"What's wrong with you tonight? Have you gotten your wires crossed?"

My abnormal behavior time and again had Michael losing his patience. That was actually no surprise since he had never been a patient man. It was already impressive that he managed to hold his temper when I avoided his kiss and ignored him earlier.

"Nothing's wrong. It's late, so let's go to sleep."

I could tell that he was seething, but he was still trying his best to suppress his anger. However, I wasn't in the mood to explain anything.

Nevertheless, my words didn't appease Michael. He turned me around and bored his ebony eyes right into mine. I could see fury blazing in them.

"Anna, what exactly is wrong with you tonight? Are you angry because I came home late?"

Michael frowned slightly. Despite his wrath, he was still patient.

"No. You're reading too much into things," I murmured calmly.

His furious gaze would usually intimidate me. For some inexplicable reason tonight, I wasn't the least bit afraid.

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Chapter 295 Afraid You Would Overthink

"Then why are you angry?"

When I denied his conjecture, Michael became all the more puzzled. Even at that very moment, he had no idea I had seen him having dinner with Emma.

As I stared into his eyes, the question I wanted to ask him stuck in my throat. Ugh! Do I still lack courage at the end of the day?

"Anna, just spit it out if you've got something to say!"

Michael was obviously at the end of his patience. His jet-black eyes were pinned intently on mine, and his handsome face had darkened significantly.

"Who did you meet tonight?"

At long last, I still gave voice to the question haunting me. While I'm only an ordinary woman, I can't tolerate infidelity. Even if our relationship changes because of the incident tonight, I still have to get to the bottom of it!

Looking into my eyes, Michael was stunned upon hearing my question. He didn't answer me right away.

"Why are you suddenly asking me this? Have you gotten wind of something or other?"

A frown marred his face, and hesitance manifested in his eyes. Perhaps he, too, had his suspicions.

"You haven't answered my question."

Still, I didn't answer him. Right then, I only wished that he would explain voluntarily. I hoped that there would be no secrets between us.

Perchance Michael hadn't expected my persistence because the furrow of his alluring brows deepened when my words fell. He gazed into my eyes for a long time.

"I've already told you on the phone earlier that I was having dinner with a client tonight."

His voice was still as even as ever. If I hadn't seen him with Emma with my very own eyes, I definitely wouldn't doubt his words.

I initially hoped that he would tell me the truth, but even greater distress swamped me after hearing his answer.

I've already made things so clear, yet he still kept it a secret from me. Is there really something scandalous going on between them? Why can't he be honest with me?

My heart sank to rock bottom. I had nothing else to say to him then.

I didn't even want to see him for a moment longer.

"Anna, open your eyes and tell me clearly what exactly is wrong with you tonight!"

Michael's patience vanished entirely. He glowered at me with fury written all over his face.

Forced to open my eyes, I stared into his profound gaze. Yet, I couldn't discern his thoughts.

A long time passed before I finally murmured, "I saw you with Emma tonight. Is she your client?"

The corners of my mouth curved into a mocking arc. He has always been telling me he loathes her, but they had dinner together at such a late hour tonight. She even held his arm intimately, and he raised no protest. Therefore, I truly can't sense that he detests her.

Hearing that, Michael was visibly taken aback. But in the next moment, he promptly concealed his emotions. However, the flash of emotion that flickered across his eyes earlier had me feeling exceedingly perturbed.

"Were you tailing me?"

He didn't answer my question earlier, but questioned me with a grim expression on his face.

"No. I saw it incidentally. Michael, we're getting married soon. Can you please explain what exactly is going on with you and Emma?"

I stared right into his eyes, waiting eagerly to hear his explanation.

I once discovered Justin cheating on me with my best friend when we were about to get married. I finally found my happiness after much difficulty. Just when I thought I was the luckiest woman in the entire world, I spotted Michael having dinner with Emma.

I really didn't want to experience the horrifying feeling of betrayal once more. Michael was different from Justin, so I definitely wouldn't be able to take it if the former had betrayed me for real.

"I was merely discussing business with her. You read too much into things," Michael answered placidly, without further explanation.

Throughout it all, he looked into my eyes.

"You were discussing business with her? Do you think I'll believe that? Michael, if you regret getting together with me, tell me frankly. I can accept you not loving me, but I can't accept your infidelity."

I inhaled deeply, trying my best to keep my tears at bay.

If their relationship is really as per my imagination, then I'd rather he no longer loves me than him doing anything that constitutes a betrayal to me!

"Anna Garcia!"

My words caused Michael to lose control. A scorching rage blazed in his eyes, making it evident that he was apoplectic right then.

Nonetheless, I regarded him calmly. Although I was rather shocked by his expression, it was overshadowed by sorrow.

“Michael, I love you. Please don’t hurt me.”

I couldn’t quite keep my emotions in check anymore. Reaching out, I hugged him around the neck and buried my head in his neck to sob.

I had been feeling exceedingly uneasy that night. I was afraid that he no longer loved me, and even more than that, terrified that he would betray me.

Michael was initially infuriated, but he jolted hard at the sight of me crying. In the next second, he pulled me into his embrace.

“I’ll never hurt you.”

He hugged me tightly, his voice low and deep as it echoed in my ears like a promise.

Relief suffused me. Still, I couldn’t rest easy after what I witnessed that night.

“But what’s with you and Emma-”

I still wanted to pursue the matter, but I trailed off mid-utterance since I knew he wasn’t the kind of person who liked explaining himself.

“I discussed the breach of contract with her tonight. As you know, it has to do with me calling off the wedding.”

Perhaps Michael felt sorry about my distressed state then, for he voluntarily answered my question without me having to ask further this time.

And at that moment, I believed him.

“Then why didn’t you tell me the truth earlier? Why did you lie and say that you were meeting a client?”

Recalling how he hadn’t been truthful with me though I questioned him repeatedly just now, aggravation and ire flooded me. I poked my head out and peered at him with displeasure etched on my face.

“I was afraid that you would overthink it. Look, isn’t this exactly what you’re doing right now?”

As Michael looked at my eyes that were shimmering with tears, he sighed in exasperation. Then he reached out and wiped the tears off my face with his long and slender fingers.

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Chapter 296 We Are Always Friends

As I sensed the warmth from Michael's fingers, my heart skipped a beat. I gazed at him through teary eyes. Although he had already explained things earlier, I couldn't help feeling aggrieved.

"Were you truly discussing the breach of contract with Emma?"

I stared at him uneasily. I felt truly unsettled because I had been betrayed once. Fear inundated me, and I was terrified that Michael would end up just like Justin.

"Don't you believe me anymore?"

Surprisingly, Michael didn't get up in arms in the face of my doubt. Mayhap he knew I was only feeling disquieted from my past.

"It's not that I don't believe you. I'm just afraid..."

I lowered my eyes. Truth be told, I particularly abhorred myself at that moment. I was wholly dependent on him at present that I might feel as though the sky had collapsed if he truly left me.

"As I said, I'll never hurt you. Anna Garcia, you're the only woman I love."

Michael hugged me tightly again, his voice deep and beguiling. Inexplicably, I felt much more at ease then.

That night, he slept with me tightly in his arms. Perchance it was because he explained things to me that my reliance on him grew increasingly stronger.

When I woke up the next day, he was no longer beside me. I glanced at the time, only to see that it was already past nine in the morning. Ever since I got pregnant, I became increasingly fond of sleeping and would slumber for hours on end each time I intended to take a nap.

I truly felt that I was going to become a pig soon.

Subsequently, I cast a look at the date and realized that I should be going to the hospital for a checkup that day. Michael even reminded me about it two days ago and said he would accompany me for the prenatal checkup. However, I couldn't quite bring myself to trouble him since he had been very much busy in the past few days.

He already has his plate full with his company matters. It'll be more exhausting if he still has to take the time to accompany me now.

After changing, I ate something simple for breakfast before setting out for the hospital.

Upon learning that the hospital where I had been having my prenatal checkups belonged to Ronan, I actually felt a tad perturbed. On second thought, he hardly ever makes an appearance. Besides, how could a freedom lover like him possibly come to the hospital every day?

A wave of guilt inexplicably surged within me. It was more than ten days since we last had any contact. I wonder whether we could even be friends anymore.

I hailed a taxi to the hospital. When I went to the lobby to make payment, I caught sight of someone who looked like Ronan. Nevertheless, there were too many people, and I couldn't see clearly either.

Preoccupied with getting into line to make payment, I quickly forgot about him. At that exact moment, a voice that made my heart lurch slightly rang out behind me.

"Anna."

It was Ronan's voice, lacking his usual insouciant nonchalance.

At that, I glanced back over my shoulder. When I saw his handsome countenance right before my eyes, my heart jolted, and words momentarily eluded me.

"What a coincidence to see you here today!"

That trite remark was all I could say as a greeting to him after a long silence.

"Are you here for a prenatal checkup?"

Ronan's expression remained impassive, and that had me feeling a touch disconcerted. In my memory, he was a touch rogue with a wicked smile. Now, his cheerful face was blanketed by a layer of tranquility that wasn't him at all.

"Yeah," I replied softly, even as I averted my gaze awkwardly upon noticing his intent gaze on my stomach.

I knew he must be still feeling extremely upset right then, so I felt particularly guilty every time I saw him like that. I didn't know what I could do to make up for it.

"Let's go. I'll take you there. You can skip the queue."

Ronan stalked over to me after a moment of silence while looking straight into my eyes. Taking my hand, he dragged me to the bank of elevators.

His sudden action had panic surging within me. I instinctively wanted to break free from his hold, but his grip on me was too strong. Thus, I had no choice but to allow him to continue grasping my hand.

"Where are you taking me, Ronan?"

It was going to be my turn, but look what happened now. He pulled me out of the queue! If I were to queue all over again, I really don't know how long I'd have to wait.

"As I said earlier, I'm taking you for a prenatal checkup."

Ronan didn't even bother looking at me, dragging me right into the elevator before pressing the floor button.

We were the only ones inside. I felt exceedingly awkward with just the two of us in this enclosed space.

"Actually, I'll be fine on my own. It's just a normal checkup. You don't need to follow me."

Remembering the agonized look in his eyes when he regarded me back then, I didn't quite dare look him in the eye. After having hurt him so deeply, regret inexorably lingered within me.

"Why are you here alone today? Did he not come with you?"

Ignoring my comment, Ronan changed the subject. I knew he was referring to Michael. The tense relationship between the two cousins had me concerned.

“He has a lot of work at the office recently, so I didn’t tell him I was coming for a checkup today.”

Indeed, Michael had already told me a few days ago that he would accompany me for my prenatal checkup. I didn’t want to disrupt his work, so I came alone.

Besides, I was just in the first trimester. It wasn’t as though I was close to giving birth and needed someone to keep me company.

After having obtained my answer, Ronan didn’t comment further. The elevator plunged into silence once more, making me even more ill at ease.

“I apologize for losing control of my emotions a few days ago and treated you in such a reprehensible manner,” Ronan said.

He dipped his head a fraction, but his gaze was fixated on my face.

“Let’s not speak of the past anymore. Furthermore, I hurt you first, so you did nothing wrong in this matter. If anyone has to apologize, I should be the one.”

While his words back then were extremely unpleasant and upsetting, I certainly didn’t blame him. Conversely, I felt very much guilty to see him in his current state. If it weren’t for me, he wouldn’t be so tormented.

“Can we still be friends in the future?” Ronan cautiously inquired as he looked into my eyes.

I could see hope burning brightly in his clear eyes.

“Of course! We’re always friends!”

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 297

[/ Love from My Dominant Boss](#)

Chapter 297 You Are Eating My Steak

While I had no romantic feelings toward him, he was an exceedingly important friend to me. Hence, I had never thought of giving up our friendship from the very beginning.

With my affirmative answer, Ronan’s expression eased considerably. The corners of his mouth tilted upward, forming a faint arc. He was a striking

man in the first place, and he was even more dashing when he smiled. Truly, I loved to see him smile.

However, his smile didn't reach his eyes. Although we were currently chatting and laughing, the feeling had changed entirely. We were now treading on eggshells when we interacted with each other.

Just when I was at a loss for words, the elevator doors finally opened. I stepped out first. Only when I was with Ronan in public did my awkwardness dissipate.

"Let's go. I'll take you for a checkup."

He grabbed my hand again and headed toward the ultrasound room.

"I haven't registered or paid yet."

As he pulled me along, I abruptly realized that he had dragged me upstairs before I could register just now.

"With me here, you don't need to register or pay."

Ronan didn't even look at me despite hearing my words

When the nurse in the room saw him dragging me over, she was stunned for a moment before a faint smile bloomed on her face.

"Have her go first."

Without even sparing her a single glance, Ronan pushed me right in front of her.

"Sure, I'll make the arrangements right away."

The nurse immediately took me into the ultrasound room.

I was a tad averse inwardly. After all, plenty of pregnant women were waiting outside, and here I was cutting queue thanks to Ronan. Besides, I could clearly see the dissatisfied looks thrown my way by several pregnant ladies.

It was already too late since they had already led me into the ultrasound room.

My checkup was smooth sailing. I didn't have to queue for any tests, and that was indeed a plus point in my book.

I completed all the tests within an hour or so. The baby was still in perfect health, which granted me much peace. Being my first pregnancy, I had been worrying about many things and would only rest easy upon hearing that the baby was fine after each prenatal checkup.

When I was done, Ronan and I went to the bank of elevators once again. I originally wanted to leave right away, but I couldn't quite bring myself to say it outright.

"You must be tired after bustling around. Let's have lunch together." The elevator doors opened, and I was just about to step in when Ronan spoke at that precise moment.

"No, it's okay. You're probably very busy. I'll just go home and eat," I reflexively declined.

It was still acceptable when he helped me out with my checkup earlier, but I still felt a tad awkward to have lunch with him alone.

At my demurral, the corners of Ronan's mouth curved into a bitter smile.

In the end, he remarked once more, "Are we really going to be strangers henceforth after this?"

His voice was a soft murmur, but it inexplicably tugged at my heartstrings. Actually, I don't want to see our friendship come to this too.

As I looked at the wry expression on his face, a sliver of distress crept into me.

"All right, let's go and have lunch together. But it's your treat, okay?"

I couldn't bear to see him crestfallen. And honestly, I didn't mind whoever footed the bill. I merely said that to ease the atmosphere between the two of us.

"Sure. As long as you're willing, I don't mind treating you to a meal every day!"

Seeing that I had agreed, Ronan lifted his face. The gloominess that was shadowing him disappeared in the blink of an eye.

I flashed him a smile but said nothing further.

After leaving the hospital, we went to a nearby restaurant. As soon as we arrived, the manager instantly came up and arranged a table for us. Ronan was probably a regular patron there.

“The steak here is pretty good. You should try it.”

After we had taken our seats, Ronan gazed at me with a faint smile. While he was missing his blasé air of the past, that was already a vast improvement from before.

“You seem to be a regular here. You must have brought tons of women here to eat, huh?”

The manager spoke at length to him earlier, so it’s clear as day that he has spent quite a fortune here.

“You’re the first woman I’ve ever brought to this restaurant. Ever since making your acquaintance, no other woman has caught my interest. Oh, well...”

I only wanted to ease the atmosphere, but his unexpected reply that followed had me feeling more awkward.

I knew he was serious about me back then. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have volunteered to stay and offered to raise the child with me after learning about my pregnancy.

However, I was now with Michael and would be his cousin-in-law in the future. It was really inappropriate for Ronan to make such a comment now.

I lowered my head in embarrassment without responding to that. Right then, I couldn’t think of any topic and didn’t know what to say.

Fortunately, the steak was promptly served. Thus, I could then bury my head in the food to conceal my uneasiness.

I was still having morning sickness. My appetite was lacking, and I didn’t feel like eating anything.

Ronan had his head lowered as he concentrated on cutting his steak, yet he didn’t eat any. While I was a touch perplexed, I didn’t ask him about it.

In no time, the steak on his plate was all cut into pieces. Then he placed it before me and swapped with mine.

Huh? So, he was actually helping me to cut my steak earlier.

“No, it’s okay. I can manage on my own.”

It was an intimate gesture shared only between lovers. I felt rather mortified that he did that for me right then.

“We both ordered steaks of different flavors. This plate is actually mine.”

My demurral did not offend Ronan. Instead, he pointed casually at my plate.

When I registered his meaning, embarrassment inundated me in an instant. I had been eating his steak!

Oh my God, why didn't he say anything? I've already eaten his!

I initially wanted to object to him taking my steak. However, I no longer had any reason to do so.

Ronan looked at me with amusement, and he seemed very much jubilant to see me all mortified.

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 298

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Chapter 298 Slapping Emma

I was actually resentful that Ronan said nothing about me eating his steak. Upon seeing his smile, I felt that my embarrassment didn't matter. Well, I'd just consider my humiliation as making it up to him.

Then, I stared at the cut steak he handed me just now. Putting my mortification aside, I started wolfing it down.

Without realizing it, the atmosphere between us eased considerably.

At some point, I noticed Ronan frowning slightly at something behind me.

Following his gaze, I likewise glanced behind me in puzzlement. The moment I glimpsed Emma's countenance, my appetite swiftly vanished.

My brows scrunched together, and I planned to ignore her since there was nothing more to contend between us. Michael has already decided to be with me. She won't be able to affect me, no matter what she says.

“What a coincidence to bump into you here, Anna! And you're even having lunch with Ronan!” Emma smirked.

I could see the sheer hatred in her eyes, but she was currently suppressing it and feigning a calm expression.

“I don’t think it’s any of your business who I have lunch with.”

I eyed her frostily, not in the mood to entertain her. Hearing her scornful tone, I knew she must be plotting something or other. Nonetheless, I didn’t want to go head to head with her since Ronan was here.

“Ronan, I heard you courted Anna in the past, yes? At that time, your relationship with her seemed to be extremely intimate. Is that true?”

Surprisingly, Emma wasn’t offended by my indifference. Instead, she turned to Ronan and spoke to him in a mild voice.

The man was a shrewd person, so he could tell at a single glance she was deliberately picking on me. All at once, his expression went stony.

“Who are you to meddle with my relationship? Who are you to me? My cousin-in-law? Oh yes, I forgot my cousin has already called off his wedding to you! You’re nobody to me now.”

“How dare you, Ronan Moore?”

Ronan was also one who could kill someone effortlessly. He didn’t use any profanity or blow his temper, yet a nonchalant remark was all it took to aggravate Emma.

She shot daggers at him, obviously infuriated at being ridiculed.

“Please leave if there’s nothing else, Emma. Don’t hamper our appetites here!”

Ronan didn’t give a sh*t whether she was pissed off. Emma was livid, but Ronan feigned ignorance and he chased her out of the restaurant.

Emma was a proud woman. At the sight of the man’s contempt for her, the reins of the wrath within her instantly snapped.

“You’re really something else, Anna. You’ve finally stolen Michael away from me, and now you’re seducing Ronan. Can’t you live without a man?”

Although Emma was fuming because of Ronan, she directed her anger at me instead. After all, he was still Michael’s cousin, and his power in the family wasn’t to be underestimated. She probably didn’t dare offend him, so she could only vent all her rage on me.

Her remark was simply a declaration that I was cheating on Michael and insinuating that I was a sl*t. I had no problems inferring that implicit meaning when it was so conspicuous. I initially didn't want to bicker with her, but she was always so relentless that I was truly enraged this time.

"Emma, please watch your tongue when you speak. Ronan and I are friends. Is it against the law for us to have lunch together? Besides, what has whomever I eat with has got to do with you that you're pointing fingers here?"

I abruptly shot to my feet and looked right into her eyes. I usually refrain from kicking up a fuss, but that doesn't mean that I'll allow others to pick on me! She always assumes that I'm easy prey; she has underestimated me. Also, she's only targeting me because Michael doesn't love her and doesn't care about her.

Many people swung their gazes at her when my words rang out.

Emma had always been an arrogant person, so she glared at me irately now that she was left with no retort. The loathing in her eyes glinted even more vividly.

"Anna, don't think that you now have nothing to worry about anymore. You're not worthy of Michael! I'll never allow you to marry him!"

Having nothing else to say to that, she could only spit out those words.

"You have no say in whether I can marry Michael. He's willing to marry me, and I'm also willing to marry him. Therefore, you can't stop it from happening."

I regarded her coldly, not at all intimidated by her threat.

"Anna, you're truly shameless, you b*tch! You already have Michael, so why are you still seducing Ronan?"

At my words, Emma hit the roof. After bellowing that in high dudgeon, she lifted her hand to swing it at my face.

My eyes went wide in shock. Oh no, it's already too late for me to dodge! Am I really to just take this blow from her?

Fortunately, Ronan was quick to act. He grabbed her wrist in one fell swoop. At that moment, his expression was icy cold, making it evident that he was furious.

His grip was extremely strong, and fury blazed in his gaze as he stared at her.

“What are you doing, Ronan? Let go of me!”

Emma wrenched her hand away hard when pain shot up her wrist. Likewise, her eyes radiated outrage as she glowered at him.

Hmph! She must have thought that her hand would've surely landed on my face and never expected Ronan to stop her at that critical moment!

My heart that had been previously lodged in my throat finally settled back into my chest. Turning, I eyed her with wrath similarly burning in my gaze.

Facing her, I raised my hand and slapped her across the face without an ounce of hesitation. I put a lot of strength into the blow, so much so that even my hand was smarting.

Emma's face snapped to the side at my strike. When she finally gathered her wits about her, she gaped at me in disbelief even as the anger in her eyes blazed all the more hotly.

“How dare you hit me, Anna Garcia? Who do you think you are that you actually dared to hit me?”

After jolting back to her senses, her face contorted into a mask of fury, and she struggled desperately. Right that moment, her blood was boiling so hot that she wanted to kill me.

She wanted to charge at me, but before she could do so, Ronan shoved her away and stood in front of me.

“Emma Jones, is this your manners as the daughter of a prominent family, simply hitting someone just for the sake of it?”

Ronan's expression was glacial then, making it unmistakable that his patience toward Emma had reached its end.

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 299

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Chapter 299 All Loose Down There

“You claim to be mere friends with her when you’re defending her thus, Ronan? Are you such a staunch defender of hers because she slept with you?”

When Emma saw that even Ronan was shielding me, the rage within her grew into a conflagration. She spoke icily while staring at his face.

Good Lord! She’s still defaming me at this time, huh? Towering rage likewise mounted within me. Ugh! My slap across her face earlier was just too paltry! A woman like her really needs to be taught a lesson!

“Watch your words, Emma! I’ve been tolerating you from the very beginning, but you’ve truly crossed the line now!”

I was so incandescent that I trembled all over. Looking at her coldly, I tried to suppress all my wrath.

I knew that she was only deliberately slandering me because she was jealous that I was now with Michael. Nonetheless, the anger within me continued spiraling.

“I’ve crossed the line? Judging from your expression now, you must be feeling guilty, huh? Anna, who do you think will believe you when you claim that you’ve never slept with Ronan when the two of you are so close?”

Emma could distinctly perceive the storm brewing in my eyes, yet she wasn’t the least bit bothered. Instead, her gaze turned a touch triumphant as she scrutinized me, looking as though she had dirt on me.

“Emma, there’s a limit to my patience! Therefore, it’s best that you do not provoke me!”

My hands that were hanging by my sides were balled into fists, and I was currently putting all my effort into curbing my wrath. Argh! How I wish I could slap her several more times now! How could there be such a woman in this world?

“So what if just want to provoke you? How can you compare to me other than by relying on Michael and Ronan? Anna, I truly wonder what tricks a b*tch like you has up your sleeve that you actually managed to bewitch two men!”

While uttering the last sentence, Emma’s eyes were filled with envy.

Well, well... She truly doesn't care about her image anymore after having lost Michael. In the past, she would feign gentleness and graciousness in front of others, but now, she doesn't even bother putting on the most basic facade!

Keeping a lid on the bubbling outrage within me, I was just about to retort when Ronan roared, "That's enough!"

His handsome countenance was terrifyingly grim. It was my first time seeing him in such an inflamed state. Although he had always given me the impression of an easygoing man with no temper, I still couldn't help shuddering at his infuriated expression right then. After all, his frigid expression was just too similar to Michael's.

Emma, who was going to insult me further, was stunned for a moment upon hearing his bellow. But when she realized what was happening, she flipped her lid once more.

"You're going to protect this b*tch as well now, Ronan? Don't forget that she's presently Michael's woman! Don't you see red and feel resentful when you imagine her seeking pleasure beneath him every night? Yet, you're still defending her here? Don't you feel as though you're a fool?"

Her voice was indifferent as she stared at his face, and every single word out of her mouth was clearly meant to sow discord between Ronan and me.

My heart sank, and outrage enveloped me. As I stared at her, hatred surged within me.

Ronan hadn't completely accepted the fact that I had gotten together with Michael, so her words at that moment were undoubtedly rubbing salt into his wound.

I turned my gaze on the man, only to see that his expression had indeed turned glacial. His face was scarily grim even as a glimmer of ruthlessness flashed across his eyes.

Mild-tempered people were all the scarier when they flew into a rage, and Ronan was precisely that kind of person. I've always thought that Michael is the most terrifying person I've ever seen in my life when he loses his cool, but from the look of things now, Ronan is no less intimidating.

Similarly, Emma's gaze flickered when she saw Ronan's riled expression. Nonetheless, she swiftly masked her emotions. She then turned smug instead upon seeing that he had already gotten vexed because of her words. As such, she was sure that he wouldn't be siding with me anymore.

“Ronan, a man like you can have any woman you like. Why must you pine for a b*tch like her? A woman like her has been defiled by tons of men, so she’s probably all loose down there.”

She sounded increasingly triumphant as she spoke, and her eyes brimmed with provocation. Perhaps she now believed that her persuasion had worked its magic, and Ronan would no longer stand up for me.

Hearing such a shameful comment from her, I went off the deep end. I lifted my hand to slap her again since she needed to be taught some manners.

However, before my hand could land on her face, a slap sounded, and Ronan struck her across the face.

He glowered at her with fury etched on his face. At that moment, he resembled a predator lying in wait, making one’s blood run cold.

Emma’s hand flew to her face as she gaped at him incredulously. She probably never expected him to get physical and hit her.

Her eyes were as wide as saucers, and it was a long while before she finally snapped back to her senses.

Glaring at him, she immediately shrieked, “How dare you hit me, Ronan Moore? Do you know who I am? Yet, you had the guts to hit me?”

She had been living a pampered life since young, so she was naturally a stranger to such grievance. In fact, likely no one had ever dared to hit her in all her years. But today, two people had slapped her across the face. Hence, she definitely couldn’t tolerate such an insult.

“Listen here carefully, Emma. Anna isn’t someone you can simply disparage. And now, I’ve finally understood why my cousin didn’t want you. No man will like a shrew like you!”

Ronan looked down at her condescendingly, his gaze so cold that not a trace of emotion could be discerned. After declaring that frostily, he no longer spared her a single glance but took my hand and strode away.

“Just you wait, Anna! I’ll never let you off the hook!”

Emma’s livid voice again rang out from behind me. Not only am I aware that she’s bursting with hostility toward me right now, but she certainly won’t give up easily either. Thus, I’ve got to be careful in the future. Otherwise, no one knows what she’ll do.

Ronan dragged me out of the restaurant without saying a single word throughout it all. Besides, his striking face remained as dark as ever.

After getting into his car, I could sense that the atmosphere was particularly oppressive. Despite his lack of reaction earlier, I knew that Emma's words had already affected him inwardly.

He had feelings for me, so he instinctively regarded me as his woman. As such, he was naturally upset to hear about me being intimate with Michael since men were inherently possessive.

Love from My Dominant Boss

Chapter 300

[/ Love from My Dominant Boss](#)

Chapter 300 A Diamond Ring

Ronan sped on the road with his eyes trained straight ahead. From beginning to end, he said nary a word.

I felt exceedingly uneasy at his present state, and distress engulfed me. I wanted to comfort him, but I didn't know what to say. After all, it was an indisputable fact that I was intimate with Michael, and I was even pregnant with his child right then.

"Ronan..." I called out his name softly after hesitating for an eternity.

"You don't need to say anything. I know Emma was deliberately disparaging you, and you're not the kind of woman who sleeps around. Otherwise, I wouldn't have fallen for you."

Ronan seemed to have anticipated my words, for he had already made his stance clear without waiting for me to explain myself.

Lowering my head, I heaved a helpless sigh. Guilt showed in my eyes as I gazed at him, yet I just didn't know what to say.

"I know you truly love Michael, but I still hope that you'll give me a chance. If you're not happy with him and wish to leave him, please consider me first, okay?"

Stopping the car, Ronan turned and regarded me seriously.

I could see the solemnity in his eyes, but it was precisely that which had me feeling all the more guilty. He has sacrificed a lot for me, but all I gave him in return was hurt.

I hung my head since I wasn't quite certain how to answer him.

If I concur, then I'll be giving him hope, and he won't be as sad as he is right now. However, I also know all too well that I'll only be holding him back if I do. I've got no idea what will become of me if I break up with Michael, nor do I have any idea whether I'll fall in love with him then. But as of now, the answer is no.

"Please promise me that, Anna!"

Upon seeing my prolonged silence, Ronan's voice became tinged with a hint of urgency, and his gaze turned pleading. At the sight of him then, I really couldn't bring myself to turn him down.

After a long silence, I finally nodded. "Okay, I promise you that."

While this is an empty promise, I already owe him too much, so I'm willing to give him if it makes him feel better.

Of course, I didn't think that I would break up with Michael because he was the only man I had ever loved irrevocably in this lifetime. I felt that I wouldn't leave him for the rest of my days.

Having said that, if we truly broke up one day, I would fulfill my promise and make it up to Ronan.

When Ronan saw that I had agreed, he was thrilled and clutched my shoulders with both hands. Delight shone in his eyes as he gazed at me.

It's just an empty promise, yet he's over the moon. But looking back at the past, I've been rejecting him from the very beginning and never gave him any hope. This is the only time, so he'll naturally be ecstatic.

"It's rather late, so please drive me home. I'm a bit tired."

Not wanting to continue lingering on that subject with him, I straightened and stared right ahead as I said that placidly.

Immersed in his exhilaration then, Ronan didn't notice anything amiss about me. "Sure! I'll drive you back right away!" he agreed readily.

After saying that, he started the car and drove toward Birchwood.

The car came to a stop at the entrance of the community. In the past, he would insist on seeing me to the door, but he probably knew that Michael was also staying here at present, so he didn't offer to accompany me upstairs.

Anyway, that was a good thing because the longer we spent in each other's presence, the more awkward I felt.

When I had alighted from his car, I was instantly much more relaxed.

But upon returning home, I was still bugged by the incident earlier. Emma seemed extremely resentful, so I was worried that something would happen before our wedding.

I did my best to calm myself and kept comforting myself inwardly. No matter what happens, I still have Michael by my side. He'll definitely resolve the problem, and our wedding will undoubtedly go smoothly!

Returning to my room, I took a nap. When I woke up in the afternoon, my mood had improved significantly. I glanced at the time, only to see that Michael would be getting off work soon.

Although the housekeeper had already prepared dinner, I knew that he preferred eating my cooking, so I dismissed her.

Then, I started cooking dinner in the kitchen alone. At the thought that Michael would be able to eat my cooking every night, happiness suffused me.

I wore a blissful smile on my face. When I had finished cooking, Michael had also arrived home from work. He smelled the aroma of food the moment he stepped into the house. He walked over to me with his thin lips curved into a faint arc.

We sat at the dining table across from each other. As he swept a gaze over the dinner I prepared, he seemed very much contented. Ever since he came home, a faint smile lingered on his face. While it wasn't conspicuous, it was exceedingly captivating.

I loved his smiling countenance, and it simply possessed an indescribable allure that enticed me.

Halfway through dinner, Michael suddenly stilled and stared at me solemnly.

"What's wrong? Is the food not to your liking?" I asked in a murmur while looking at him in bemusement.

In the past, he ate plenty as long as it was something I cooked, but he only ate a few bites today. Could it be that the food isn't to his liking?

"No, it's just that I've got something more important to do right now."

A seductive smile tugged at Michael's lips, and he reached into his pocket.

When he said that, my puzzlement grew. Isn't eating the most important thing now? Is there anything else that takes precedence?

My gaze was riveted on his hand as curiosity drove my desire to know what exactly he meant.

Shortly after, he took out a square jewelry box from his pocket and handed it to me.

As I stared at the jewelry box, my heart hammered wildly. I already had my suspicions, but I still didn't dare believe it.

My eyes were rounded from shock, and my heart pounded in a frantic rhythm. Even my outstretched hand was trembling slightly.

"Open it and have a look."

Michael flashed me a smile upon seeing my nervousness. Then, he motioned for me to open the jewelry box.

I took the jewelry box from him. Although it was light, it felt exceedingly heavy in my hand.

When I opened the jewelry box, the dazzling diamond that greeted me had me momentarily falling into a trance. It was a diamond ring.

The diamond ring wasn't massive. Instead, it appeared to be of the exquisite type and was incredibly stunning.

My heart skipped a beat. While I had already surmised that it might be a ring, I still couldn't help being shocked when beholding it with my own eyes. At the same time, tears started shimmering in my eyes.

I always thought that he didn't care about giving me a ring. It'd always bothered me greatly, but I didn't dare mention it to him and had been bottling it instead.