# Love from My Dominant Boss Chapter 291 - 295

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 marring 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.

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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.

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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.

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"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.