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Chapter 386 Is This The End Of Our Love

Michael was going to stop his father from hitting me, but he was too late. Before he could utter a single word, I felt the pain from the slap on my cheek.

Lincoln used to treat me like his own, precious daughter in the past. I thought of him as someone who was easy to get along with. However, the thought completely disappeared with that slap of his. Not only did I feel the pain in my cheek, but my heart ached too.

"Didn't we treat you well after you got together with Michael? I know Josephine has her temper and nags at you a lot, but you didn't have to do that! No matter what, she's still your elder! How could you hit her? I can't believe how wrong I was to even think that you were a sensible daughter-in-law!" my father-in-law shouted while looking at me. His gentle and doting eyes were replaced with disappointment.

In the Shaw family, he was always the one to support my relationship with Michael. Therefore, I would be lying if I said I wasn't sad.

"That's enough! Anna's still pregnant! How could you hit her? If anything happens to my great-grandchild, it'll be your fault!" Andy shouted angrily at Lincoln after he saw his son hit me.

I knew Andy was disappointed in me too. If I weren't mistaken, the reason he was mad at Lincoln was because of the child inside me. If I'm not pregnant, will you still defend me?

"Dad, my wife is still in a critical state in the hospital! I don't have time to bother with this woman! If anything happens to Josephine, I won't let her off!"

Lincoln was really furious this time. He used to a gentle and kind man. However, all traces of kindness were gone. I couldn't do anything but suppress my feelings and stay quiet.

"Anna, you did this. The Shaw family will not forgive you easily. But we'll decide what do to with you after Josephine's out of immediate danger," Andy said as he looked at me with cold eyes. Although he wasn't as harsh as Lincoln, his fondness toward me was gone.

I kept quiet with my head down the entire time because I had expected their reactions. However, it hurt more than I thought it would be.

Even after Lincoln and Andy went upstairs, I was still rooted in the spot. At that time, Michael was glaring at me with pure fury while suppressing his anger.

"Anna, you will regret this!" he spat coldly as he took a few strides toward me. Right after saying that, he turned and walked away without looking at me.

Over the next few days, I tried to visit Josephine in the hospital to see how she was doing. However, I was chased out by Lincoln every time I went. The way he treated me had completely changed. Right at that moment, I recalled the time of how my own family treated me when Steven was hospitalized in the past. Fortunately, the doctor said my mother-in-law was out of danger on the fifth day. However, no one knew when she would regain consciousness. There was also a possibility that she would be in a vegetative state for the rest of her life.

Everyone in the Shaw family let out a breath in relief while feeling saddened by the news. It was devastating to them that a person they loved, who was still alive and kicking a few days ago, was lying motionless on a hospital bed. Besides her beating heart and other signs of life, she was no different than a lifeless body.

As for Michael, he hadn't spoken to me ever since that day. It was as if our love had come to an end. Every passing second of seeing him but not being able to talk to him, as if we were enemies, was pure torture.

There were a few times I wanted to tell Michael the truth. But I couldn't bring myself to it. What about Steven?

As months passed, my tummy grew bigger. There were only a few days left before the estimated date of delivery. Because of that, I needed to go to the hospital for routine check-ups more frequently.

In the months following the incident, Michael never accompanied me for any check-ups in the hospital. It was as if he had forgotten my existence. There were countless times when I resented him for it. However, I kept telling myself that it was my decision. All of this is because I decided to take up the responsibility. That's why I should accept the consequences.

I thought Michael loathed me and didn't care about our baby anymore, but it was until a long time after that I found out he was always following me in secret whenever I went to

the hospital. He was afraid that I would get into any accident. However, I didn't know about this then.

On one of my trips for a check-up, I bumped into Ronan. He became a lot more mature after I got married to Michael. He wasn't the languid and irresponsible man anymore.

After my check-up, we went to a nearby café and chatted. We sat facing each other.

I tried to force a smile, but I forgot how it felt to curve my lips up for a smile after not smiling for two months. In the end, I could only look at him without any expression.

"Anna, I heard about what happened with Aunt Josephine some time ago. Did you really do it?" Ronan asked while looking straight into my eyes. His question broke the silence.

I knew he would ask me about this. However, I couldn't help but feel nervous about it when he really did. Since things had already happened, there was no need for me to deny anything.

"Yeah. It's true," I replied plainly and sipped my drink to hide my true feelings.

"I know you're lying to me by just looking at your eyes. I've known you for a long time, Anna. You're not that kind of person," he said seriously while staring into my eyes. There wasn't a hint of surprise in him.

My heart raced a little by his response. It was probably because of the fuzzy feeling that someone trusted me, but I didn't have any other choice.

"It's true that I did it. Thank you for trusting me," I replied. I didn't have the courage to look at him because I knew my eyes would give me away. At that time, I was focused on calming myself down so that he wouldn't see through me.

"You can't deceive me, Anna. I'm sure it has nothing to do with you! What made you shoulder the blame? Don't you know what will happen to you after you admit it was you?" Anxiety and worry filled his eyes. It was obvious that he cared a lot about this.

Ronan and Michael were completely different. Michael was calm and composed who preferred to keep things to himself. On the contrary, Ronan wasn't afraid to show his emotions. At that time, he didn't even try to hide his concern for me.

"Ronan, I'm really grateful for your trust, but it is the truth. I have nothing else to say."

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Chapter 387 He Knows The Truth

I had my head down and spoke calmly. I didn't want to continue this conversation anymore.

"Anna Garcia, are we best friends? Can't you tell me the truth? Why don't you tell me what really happened?" he asked me with hurt and worry in his eyes as he grabbed my hand abruptly.

Ronan's hands felt so warm that his faith momentarily cheered me. However, I managed to pull my hand back and look at him nonchalantly. I didn't want to be caught in the situation of such intimacy with him because it wasn't appropriate.

"I don't know what you're talking about. I did it. If I didn't, then why would I admit it? I'm not that stupid." I laughed bitterly. Although I was composed, I felt I might burst into tears at any second.

"No matter what you say, I will never believe it was you! I know you, and I trust you. There's no way you'll assault Aunt Josephine," he said determinedly as I pulled my hand away. No matter how I tried to lie, he still believed in me. To be honest, I was pretty touched by his trust.

"I have something I need to do, so if you'll excuse me." I stood up and turned to leave.

I was afraid that he would expose my lie if I continued to stay.

"I'll send you back. It's not safe for you to be alone when your tummy's so big," he said casually behind me.

Despite the casualness in his voice, he was persistent. That was why I hesitated for a while knowing he would bring up the matter again on my way back. I allowed him to accompany me to avoid arousing his suspicions.

Throughout the entire journey in his car, I stared wordlessly at the passing view. It was obvious I didn't want to talk.

"How are things between you and Michael? I heard from the nurse that you've been going for check-ups alone," Ronan said after a long silence.

I lowered my head in response to that question. I didn't know how to answer that. I thought about the way Michael had been treating me since the incident with Josephine, and my heart ached. Before the incident, we were so lovey-dovey that others envied us. Now, only the two of us knew how hard and forced things were between us.

Judging from my silence, Ronan frowned and looked at me as he sensed something was wrong between us. It pained him to see me like this.

"Why do you have to do that? I really don't understand. But, come to think of it, I can't help feeling it has something to do with your family. Am I right?" He tried again.

My heart lurched violently this time at Ronan's words, and I turned to look at him immediately with panic in my eyes.

How did he know it has something to do with my family? Could it be that he has already found out Steven was the culprit? Does it mean the Shaw family knows about this as well? Would Steven be sent to jail, then?

"W-Why do you say so?" I asked as I looked into his eyes while trying to keep my composure. My voice was so soft that it was barely audible.

"The look in your eyes tells me I'm right. So, the whole thing is really related to your family?" he asked with a poker face instead of answering my question.

It was my attitude that gave me away. Although he looked expressionless, the pain in his eyes became more obvious.

"No. It has nothing to do with my family. How do these two things relate to one another, anyway?" I replied while lowering my head.

Stay calm, Anna! He's only making guesses. There's no concrete evidence. As long as I don't admit it, he'll never know!

I tried to convince myself, but I was still worried.

He didn't care if I denied it. The next moment, he pulled his car over and turned in my direction as he looked at me seriously. Although he was asking me questions, he knew his guesses were correct.

"Who else in the world can make you do such things other than your family? You've always been a person who sticks to your principles, but whenever your family members

are involved, you'll choose to compromise. I'm sure that's how things are this time too. Am I right?"

I looked at him nervously. "Ronan, don't be ridiculous! My mother-in-law is in the hospital because of me! It has nothing to do with my family, so stop making strange assumptions. And don't even think about saying any of these to the Shaw family!" I said angrily as I tried to hide my real emotions.

I had never expected Ronan to think of it when Michael couldn't. Have I underestimated him all this while? I thought I hid it well enough. I can't believe he can still guess it.

"You know, the more worked up you get, the more I feel everything is related to Steven."

I didn't know my reactions had betrayed me until he told me. When I heard what he said, I completely panicked, and my entire body felt cold. Could it be that he has already found out?

"W-What do you know? Ronan, just finish what you want to say!"

It dumbfounded me that Ronan had somehow figured out the culprit's identity. How can it be? Steven didn't leave any evidence at the scene!

"Do I hear a confession?" he asked in a serious tone.

I lowered my gaze without saying anything. Since he already knew, there was no point in denying further.

A sense of unease welled within me.

"How did you find out? Why do you think it has to go with Steven?" I asked nervously when Ronan kept staring at me in silence.

"I saw the surveillance footage from that day. Steven appeared at the same location. To be honest, I wasn't sure that he was involved, but I know you. I'm sure you will never do such a thing. So, the only possibility I can think of is you did it for your family again."

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Chapter 388 He Is Back

I was still frustrated by Ronan's answer because he didn't have concrete evidence. If I didn't admit it, he would never find out the truth for sure.

I was at a loss for words as my mind kept thinking about what I should do. A few minutes later, I raised my head and looked at him. "I have a favor to ask of you. Since you've already found out, please keep this a secret. Don't let anyone from the Shaw family know."

I was afraid Ronan would reveal the truth to the Shaw family, and Steven would be imprisoned. Although I hated everyone in my family, this was the last time I would sacrifice myself for them. Besides, I hoped Steven could live a normal life.

Ronan widened his eyes and stared at me. There was shock and worry in his eyes. "What? Keep it a secret? Anna, do you know how stupid you are right now? Steven attacked Josephine on purpose! He deserves to be imprisoned for his action! The Shaw family won't send you off to jail, but it'll make your life in the family a living hell!"

"I know. Besides, you said so yourself. They won't send me to jail. However, if they find out it's Steven, they won't hesitate to punish him! That's why I took the blame. It's for the best."

I had already considered everything Ronan said before I made up my mind. The main reason I took the blame was because I didn't want Steven to be imprisoned.

The moment he heard my words, Ronan went stiff. His eyes were full of anger.

"You may be able to protect Steven this time. But what about next time? What if he kills someone? Will you take the blame for him then too?"

It was the first time Ronan had raised his voice at me.

"No. This is the last time. After this, I'll cut ties with that family. Ronan, please. Pretend you know nothing about this. Can you do that?" I begged while looking into his eyes.

If he tells the Shaw family the truth, Steven will be imprisoned!

"No. I must tell Michael! He needs to know you're innocent! The Shaw family shouldn't be lashing everything on you!" he shouted as he took out his phone to dial Michael's number.

My pleads were ignored.

I panicked and snatched his phone away.

"Ronan, please. I'm begging you. Please don't tell the Shaw family about this. I don't need you to lie. You only need to pretend not to know anything," I pleaded while looking into his eyes again.

He stared at me intently for a long time. There was disappointment written all over his face.

"Are they really worth it? If the Shaws don't know the truth, they'll give you a hard time."

"I've already made my decision. No matter what you say, I won't change my mind. The only thing I want right now is your sworn secrecy," I replied in a determined tone and looked calmly at him.

Ronan took a long time to consider it. Finally, he spoke in a disappointed tone as he looked at me with pain in his eyes. "Fine. I promise. But I still hope that you can really think it through."

I lowered my head. I knew he was only giving me a kind reminder, so I didn't repeat what was on my mind. I've already decided, so there's no way I'll easily change it.

Later, Ronan dropped me off outside the mansion and left saying nothing else. I was afraid that we would talk about things that I wanted to avoid.

The moment I entered the living room, I saw Michael sitting on the couch with a gloomy expression.

I hadn't seen him much in the past two months. Even if I did, it was very brief, and he never looked at me. My heart throbbed at the sight.

"Don't you need to go to the office today?" I asked softly from a few feet away.

"Ronan sent you back?" He looked at me with calm eyes.

However, there was an inexplicable hostility about him.

"Yeah."

Michael was bothered that Ronan still had feelings for me. I thought my husband would say something else, but he didn't. Nor did he look at me again. The atmosphere turned tense.

"Well... I'm going back to my room then," I said.

There were so many things I wanted to tell him. However, I knew he didn't want to see me, so I suppressed it and made my way toward the stairs.

"Wait," he said coldly as soon as I was about to leave.

"Yeah?" I whispered as I stopped in my tracks.

"Since our baby's due next week, I'll be home from now on," he said nonchalantly without looking at me.

Although it sounded casual, my heart felt warm, and my tears flowed like a river.

Despite his indifference toward me for the past few months, at this moment, I could feel his concern for me. If it isn't because of the baby, there's no way he'll choose to accompany me now.

"Okay." I hurriedly wiped my tears away and smiled.

I don't care if he's cold towards me. If he's concerned about me, I'm already satisfied.

Michael looked at me with an indescribable expression as though he had more to say. In the end, he simply walked upstairs to the study without another word.

For the past two months, he had been staying in the office, so we hadn't seen each other much. I was happy when I thought about how I would see him every day in the coming week.

I knew it wouldn't be easy for him to forgive me, but I was willing to wait. Michael, I know your love for me is real. I'm sure this will pass.

Because of that, my mood became better. In the evening, I went to the kitchen to make his favorite dish for dinner. It had been too long since the two of us ate together.

Feeling clumsy with my enormous tummy, I could only make some simple dishes.

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Chapter 389 I Have Nothing To Say

After dinner was ready, I went to the study and stood outside the room for a long time in a state of exhilaration. Finally, I knocked.

"Come in," Michael said right after.

When I entered and saw him reading some documents, I didn't know what to say.

"What is it?" he asked emotionlessly while looking at me after I said nothing.

"I-I just wanted to ask you to go downstairs to have dinner together," I whispered.

"Okay. I got it."

I was a little disappointed by his response. I missed the time when he would treat me with affection before the incident with Josephine.

"Then, I'll go down first." I left the room.

Right then, I didn't know what else to say to him anymore. To him, I was a stranger living under his roof.

At the dining table, the two of us sat across from each other and ate. However, it wasn't the same as last time. We were happy then. All that was left between us was emptiness.

"How are things at the company lately? Have you been busy?" I asked to break the ice. I didn't want things to continue like this between us.

"Yeah."

One word. It was as if he felt it was a waste of his time to talk to me.

I looked at his handsome face briefly before I lowered my head and continued eating.

"Are we going to stay like this forever? Have you thought about how we should get along in the future?" Finally, I mustered the courage to ask him.

I couldn't take it anymore.

Michael raised his head to look at me, frowning. A second later, he said, "We'll talk about us next time. I don't have the time or mood to think about that now."

There was a hint of impatience in his voice. He knew what I wanted. Maybe he still can't bring himself to forgive me for what happened.

I would be lying if I said I wasn't devastated by his words. We were once happy and loved each other very much.

"Okay. I'll talk to you when you're feeling better." I forced a smile as I tried to stop my tears from flowing.

After dinner, I cleaned things up and went into my room. Meanwhile, Michael went back to the study. I didn't know if he would come into my room, but I hoped he would.

Time passed. It was almost eleven o'clock, but there was still no sign of Michael. I was disappointed. Are we going to be like this forever?

I lay in bed and dozed off. In my sleep, I thought I heard the door opening and the familiar footsteps.

It's Michael! He's here!

I opened my eyes excitedly in hopes of seeing him, but the room remained empty. Did I imagine it? I let out a bitter chuckle.

That's expected. He was still treating me coldly earlier. There's no way he'll want to sleep with me in the same bed now.

As expected, he didn't come into the bedroom that night.

The next morning, I went downstairs after I washed up.

"Good morning, Mrs. Shaw. Your breakfast is ready. Please go and eat something," the two housekeepers greeted me.

"Thank you. Where's Michael? Didn't you inform him breakfast is ready?" I asked softly as I glanced at the study.

"Mr. Shaw isn't home. He left early in the morning."

My heart sank when I heard that.

The food was tasteless when I ate alone. Every passing second was torture.

Before I knew it, four or five days had gone by in a flash.

I looked out the window. The wind howled as the downpour beat against the window panels. Flashes of lightning accompanied the roars of thunder. The sight of rain made me feel depressed. Meanwhile, Michael was still sleeping in the study. Although it was only a few steps away from my room, the distance between us grew.

I lay on my bed and tried to sleep so that I'll forget everything. It was the best time to sleep during the rain. Soon, I dozed off. However, around midnight, my tummy started to hurt.

The pain woke me up. At that time, I was already covered in sweat. I had a feeling the baby was coming.

The contraction worsened. To be honest, I was terrified. Although every woman experienced childbirth, the pain still terrified me.

I tried to endure the pain as I stood up to get a glass of water in the room to calm myself down. Fortunately, the contraction subsided for a bit. Before my mouth came into contact with the glass, the pain returned. In an instant, it slipped from my hand and shattered on the floor.

I placed my hand over my bump and squatted down. Blood drained from my face because of the pain. I had never felt this agony before in my entire life.

I slowly got up as I breathed through the pain and walked toward the bed. All this while, my hand was still placed over my bump. Suddenly, I remembered Michael was in the study.

Before I got to the bed, he had rushed into the room. When I saw him, I let out a relieved breath and sat on the floor. The pain was too overwhelming.

"What's wrong? Are you feeling unwell?" he asked and walked toward me in big strides while looking at me worriedly.

"My stomach hurts. I think it's time," I said through the pain as I grabbed his hand.

I instantly felt aggrieved when I saw his worried expression. Michael, I thought you' don't love me anymore!

"We're going to the hospital now!" he said and carried me. After putting me in the back seat, he sped toward the hospital.

It was still raining heavily when we left. Judging by how fast he was driving, it was obvious he was nervous.

The pain became unbearable as it intensified. I couldn't stop myself from moaning in agony.

It was excruciating. I finally understood how every mother felt when they were about to give birth.

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Chapter 390 The Child Is Born

"Bear with it a little more. We're reaching the hospital soon!" Michael said hastily as he glanced at me.

Two days ago, he was still treating me indifferently. However, all that vanished.

I didn't reply because the pain was overwhelming.

Although I had expected the pain of having a baby, I wasn't prepared for the intensity. No one should go through this agony.

I grabbed the fabric of my clothes tightly as I tried to distract myself from the pain, but it only made things worse.

Michael suddenly slowed down. It turned out an accident at the traffic light was obstructing the flow.

"D*mn it!" he cursed and continued to honk.

He was panicking. It was the first time he saw me in that much pain. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead as I moaned.

"What's going on there?" I asked.

I was already terrified by childbirth, but now that his car had stopped, my anxiety grew stronger.

"It's nothing. We'll reach the hospital soon!" Seeing me in such agony broke his heart.

After that, he stepped on the accelerator and sped off.

In the upcoming traffic lights, Michael completely ignored the red light. He continued driving without stopping. Within minutes, we reached the hospital. It felt like an eternity to me.

The contractions were driving me crazy.

On our way to the hospital, Michael had called Ronan and asked him to prepare for my delivery. The latter agreed immediately.

The moment Michael got me out of the car, he put me down on the bed and I was wheeled into the delivery suite. A few nurses stopped him from entering.

"I want to go in!" he said unhappily to the nurses while furrowing his brows.

"Are you sure?" one nurse asked.

"Of course!" he said and walked toward me before the nurse could say anything else.

I was happy that he wanted to be there for me during my hardest time, but at the same time, I didn't want him to see me in a mess.

Michael held my hand as he stood beside my hospital bed. Although he said nothing, I could feel his heartache and anxiety.

A male doctor entered the room. Michael's face darkened instantly when he saw the man.

"Get out! I want a female doctor!" he half-shouted at the doctor before the latter even got to my bed.

The doctor was stunned, probably because he didn't expect Michael to say that. "Sir, I'm a gynecologist. To me, your wife is only a woman who is about to deliver a baby. Please don't think too much about it."

Michael continued to look angry. I knew he wouldn't allow a male doctor to deliver our baby. He's always been possessive. There's no way he'll let another man see my body, especially my vagina.

Although what the doctor said made sense, and I didn't have any discrimination about that, it felt weird to have a man deliver my baby.

"Are there any other female doctors around? I prefer a woman," I whispered through the pain with gritted teeth.

"Hurry up! If you continue to waste my time, I'll tear the whole hospital apart!" Michael yelled at the doctor who was standing at the side.

I was sure Michael was worried about me when he saw how painful I looked. It was also obvious he couldn't bear to let another man see my private part.

The doctor scurried away after Michael yelled at him. In minutes, a female doctor rushed into the delivery room.

The nurses had already completed the disinfection procedures. The doctor asked me to spread my legs wide right after she got here.

I was quite conservative, so I felt uncomfortable letting others see my private part. However, when I thought about my child, none of this mattered.

The pain intensified. With the guidance of the female doctor, I continued to take deep breaths and pushed.

Michael was staring at me with furrowed brows the entire time. I couldn't help but moan when the pain was at its peak.

It was all that I could remember. My child was finally born after what seemed like an eternity. When I heard my baby's cries, my motherly instinct was activated.

Although I was completely exhausted, I still wanted to see my baby.

"Congratulations! You gave birth to a healthy boy," the nurse announced as she brought my baby to my side.

Everything felt so surreal when I wrapped my arms around my son, and I couldn't deny how happy I felt.

Our baby is finally here! Our son!

Michael looked at the baby and finally relaxed.

"You've done well," he said as he kissed my forehead.

My labor broke him. He had completely changed from the cold person he was a few days ago.

I looked at him while smiling in silence. If our baby can mend things between us, it will be the happiest thing in the entire world!

The moment I was sent to the normal ward, the Shaws, including Lincoln and Andy, got there too. However, they came to see the baby instead of me.

Lincoln didn't even look at me. When he got into the room, he walked straight to the baby's cot and continued to compliment the baby. It was the same for Andy. No one was happier than him at that moment when he looked at his great-grandson.

Michael asked the housekeeper to prepare some nutritious meals for me, and he fed me. I couldn't remember when he last treated me with such kindness and care.

My tears flowed as I ate. I looked into his eyes and hoped this moment would freeze. I don't care what others think about me. I only wish for us to stay this happy forever, Michael!

"Why are you crying? Our son is finally born. Shouldn't you be happy about it?"