Not Simple As Black And White

by Fannieforever15

Summary

When Ana and Christian get in a fight, how does it get resolved? Will they be able to overcome it?

Notes

Spoilers ahead... do not read if you haven't finished the entire trilogy.

See the end of the work for more notes
"What do you mean you're going to work?" Christian snaps.

We've had this argument nearly every morning since Little Blip had been discovered, and I, quite frankly, am sick of it... but I know he is, too.

"Oh, Christian..." I sigh, fighting to stay cool, calm, and collected. It's nearly impossible when my stomach is doing flips. This man never fails to keep my on my toes. "I'm perfectly capable of going to the office and sitting at my desk all day. It puts no more strain on me than sitting right here does. The only difference is that here I have you berating every breath I take."

...Oops. Too far?

He lets out a breath of exasperation and fists a hand in his hair, a very Christian thing to do. Uh oh.

Before he can get a word in edgewise, I continue on, figuring that I might as well get my words out now while I have the nerve. "I've been jumping on every demand you throw my way. You tell me to eat, I eat. You tell me to sit for a few minutes, I find the nearest chair. You want me to get an extra hour of sleep? Fine. I can make that sacrifice, but now you want me to give up the one thing that's making me sane right now? The one thing that allows me to do my own thing, maintain some form of control? That's not okay in my book."

My inner goddess takes a deep breath, preparing to unleash herself fully on this frustrating man before me. "I just want to go to the office, do some paperwork, skim over a couple manuscripts, and drink some tea. Now is that just too much to ask?" As much as I try to keep the tears out of my raising voice, I fail miserably. Thankfully, I manage to sound more rageful than tearful, though.

He nearly gapes at me. Good. "What has gotten into you, Ana? It's not like you to overreact."

And though I know that he's not purposely provoking me, it still brings about the same emotion: fury. With my already heightened emotions, my burning hot tears spill over and down my cheeks.

"I hate this!" I all but shriek at him, my voice shrill. If my words don't get through to him, maybe my tone will. "This is enough. You can't just hold me prisoner here!"

"When it comes to your well being, yes I can, Ana," Christian retorts, his voice much calmer than mine, but I can still see how irate he is. "It's not just you."

"It's not just you," I say in a scornful, mocking tone. "That's all you ever say anymore!"

This makes him seethe. "Because it's true, Anastasia," he hisses, and I flinch at the harshness of his voice. "You're so thoughtless when you're like this. It's like you don't even care about this baby."

My dams break—no, they crumble, shatter... fragmentize—and sobs break free from deep within my chest. He realizes the meaning of his words a second too late, and reaches a hand out, no doubt to wrap me into an apologetic hug.

Somewhere within me, I want to curl up against his chest and just let it out. It would be a cathartic release, him stroking my hair, me fisting my hands in his crisp, white dress shirt. He'd relent to me, allowing me to get ready and go to the office without fuss, Taylor driving me there and Sawyer in
the passenger seat beside him.

I'd be safe, and I'd feel safer yet because I was in his arms.

Regrettably though, my mind realizes that this is Christian we're talking about—my stubborn, unyielding husband, and before I even become conscious of my own thoughts, I lose it.

Lashing out at him, I slap him—hard—surprising myself even, then quickly back away. I stand cradling my stomach, scared that he'll hurt either of us. He blinks at me, and I suddenly hear this awful, animalistic weeping, and it's such a horrible noise that I glance around the room to find who's responsible for such a sound.

Until I realize that it's me making these noises.

Christian stares at me, and I continue to back away, toward the door to our bedroom, and once close enough, I flee out of the room. I find myself colliding with a solid figure, and their hands reach up to steady me as I waver on my feet. Looking up, I see that it's Taylor. In absolute mortification, I stare up at him. This is almost worse than the time he caught me in my state of… nearly undressed.

After a few seconds of intense staring and confusion, he clears his throat. "Mrs. Grey, are you not well?"

Reminding myself of an animal who feels threatened, I steal a glance to my left, then to my right before looking back at him and nodding a couple of times. Normally I'd offer him some kind of verbal reassurance, but… nothing comes to mind. Nothing I say will be right. Even my inner self gawks up at this man. As close as I'd gotten to Taylor, Gail, and Sawyer… I still don't feel comfortable laying my feelings out in front of them.

Letting me go, he takes a step back. He watches me carefully for a few more seconds before again clearing his throat and nodding. "Will you be ready at the normal time today for work, Mrs. Grey?" His usual sense of formality has returned and he's obviously uncomfortable and beyond confused, but I barely notice, nor do I really care.

In response, I offer a single shake of the head before walking down the hallway with shaking hands, wanting to put as much distance between Christian and I as possible.

Once I've reached the kitchen and see Mrs. Jones setting two mugs on the breakfast bar, I briefly wonder where I thought I was running to—I didn't get very far, did I?

Offering a soft smile as per usual, Mrs. Jones pours boiling hot water into my mug, setting a single tea bag next to it. "Why, good morning, Mrs. Grey. Can I interest you in the usual, or is there something else you'd like this morning?"

Almost like a deer caught in headlights, I stare at her, for some reason not knowing how to react to her kindness.

She knows in an instant that something is wrong—of course—and wipes her hands on a towel before approaching me. "Mrs. Grey?" she asks questioningly.

I reach up to scrub the tears from my eyes, surprised to find that they have halted for the time being. I look back in the direction of the bedroom, as if expecting Christian to be standing there. He's not, but instead I hear the muffled tones of a conversation from within the room—undoubtedly Taylor quizzing my husband on what my malfunction is.

"Mrs. Grey," Gail murmurs again, stepping closer. At her kind, gentle voice, my walls collapse
again—hormones?—and I feel tears streaming down my surely rosy and swollen cheeks. Placing a hand on my arm, she watches me with eyes full of concern. "Ana, dear, why don't you take a seat?" she suggests, but my mind processes it as an order, and I find myself sitting shakily on the nearest stool, with the help of her guiding hands.

Without saying anything further, she picks up the tea bag she'd set out, dips it into the water, then disposes of it before pushing the mug toward me. "There you go, dear."

I can tell she wants to say more, but she bites her tongue. I gaze down at the mug and simple wrap my cold hands around it before laying my head down on my arms and silently sobbing, my shoulders trembling hard.

Uncharacteristically, Gail closes a drawer a little harder than necessary, breaking her constant calm and causing me to flinch. She storms out into the direction of the bedroom, and I watch her, not lifting my head from my arm, shocked at this unfamiliar side of her.

Honestly, my other emotions outweigh my curiosity about the spectacle occurring in the other room. I squeeze my eyes shut and let my sobs go of their own volition. I weep and weep to no end, not knowing when it'll ever stop.

Suddenly I get the urge to make sure that Little Blip is okay, and I caress my stomach without ceasing my lament.
Chapter 2

After what seems like at least a half an hour, my tears run dry, and my throat turns raw. In my slightly bleary state, I tune in to the conversation still coming from the bedroom.

"Maybe John Flynn can help," I hear Taylor's voice suggest.

"I do not need my shrink, Jason." Whoa. First name basis? Christian sounds absolutely furious… maybe I should—

"With all due respect, what you need, Mr. Grey, is to take a step back from this." That was Mrs. Jones. It's odd to hear her address him in such a manner. I don't think I've ever heard her speak to him like this, in a motherly, authoritative voice, but I mean, she did sit me down to make me drink my tea.

"I'm going to check on her," he mutters, and I hear his footsteps approaching.

"No," I call out hurriedly, but it's not a call for help or a scared cry, it's simply a tired plea to be left alone in my desolate solitude. He doesn't listen to me—of course—but nevertheless, he is stopped in his tracks when he sees me sitting at his kitchen island—an absolute wreck.

"Oh, Anastasia..." he sighs, obviously still enraged, but he approaches me anyways. I don't have the strength to look up at him, but I do curl my arm around my belly protectively.

Rather than the gentle, soothing reassurances that I so desperately want to hear out of his mouth, I am surprised to hear an unwavering demand.

"Look at me."

When I shake my head, my body quivering with weariness, he crouches down in front of me, sitting back on his heels. He grabs my chin in his hand, quite roughly, and tilts my head so that my eyes meet his own gaze.

"I asked you to look at me," he whispers, not unkindly but still angrily, and I can tell that it's taking him a load effort to hold back his displeasure, which means he must have message to get across.

"You are not to go to work today, understood? I've given Taylor implicit instructions not to transport you there, and I expect you to follow this order as well," he tells me, never breaking eye contact. For some odd reason, I'm finding him very intimidating, and not in the good way.

"You're not a prisoner, Anastasia, you know that. Why don't you have Kate come and take you downtown and do some shopping for Junior?" he suggests, as if he didn't just demand me to stay away from the office. "I want you taking the day off today, taking it easy," he says with a sense of finality, disregarding the fact that I'm sitting before him with puffy eyes and snot dripping from my nostrils. If I weren't so distressed, I would be mortified that he's seeing me in such a state, but I just can't find the will to care.

I train my gaze at the floor, though he still holds my chin up. I hear him let out an exasperated sigh. "This all could have been avoided had you just listened to me… an entire argument could have been prevented," he mumbles, more to himself than me, I think. "I'm heading out in about ten minutes, so I need your word that you will not try anything stupid while I'm away." He looks at me expectantly, as if waiting for an apology from a child who got caught stealing a cookie before supper.
I get a brief surge of energy and reach up to push his hand away, not letting him get away with all of this.

"Ana," he snaps, and this is all it takes for me to snap, too.

"Please!" I beg, my voice incredibly hoarse from all the crying but still raised in volume, nonetheless. "Just let me be. For once, Christian."

Within a matter of seconds, Mrs. Jones and Taylor are both by our side, and Taylor lays a firm hand on Christian's arm which Mrs. Jones comes to my side.

It's just too much.

I stumble off of the stool and head toward the bathroom, ignoring everyone else in the room. Perhaps a hot bath is what I need to soothe my nerves and, more importantly, to help me forget that this morning ever happened.

Christian follows me—of course. When I reach the bathroom, obviously not able to do what I'd planned—shutting and locking the door behind me—I turn to face my enraged husband. "Enough. I'm too tired," I plead, hating how emotional and weak I've become.

Christian stares me down with a serious expression but softens his eyes and voice. "Ana. I need you safe. You understand that, I know you do."

Reluctantly, and with a small sniffle, I nod.

"This has gone much too far," he continues, and I see his remorse over this whole situation. He's right. This is out of hand, and I wish I'd never gotten out of bed today. "I didn't mean to upset you, frighten you—whatever I have done, but you have to understand—"

"Christian. Go," I whisper. "Go. This conversation is over. I'm done."

He looks as if he's going to say more, but wisely, he just nods curtly. "Can I kiss you goodbye?" he asks in a soft voice.

I shake my head a little—yes, I'm that upset—and I see the pain in his eyes.

I sigh—why do I always give him his way?— and I place my hand in his, raising it to his mouth. He plants a firm kiss to the back of my hand before releasing it and either he's confident enough that I'm not going to try to leave, or he trusts his security to keep me home, because he says no more. The conversation is over, and he turns to leave.

Minutes later, I hear the ding of the elevator from where I stand in the doorway of the bathroom. Knowing that the door is closing and that he's leaving, I surrender to the overwhelming pain that makes my chest and stomach ache and sink to the floor in the hallway of Christian Grey's apartment.
Chapter 3

Not two minutes pass before I hear a soft patter of footsteps approaching me, and I know that it is Mrs. Jones. I vaguely realize that she's become less formal around me since I found out about Blip.

Kneeling beside me, she takes my hands. "Up you go, darling. Come on," she says gently, bending down to help me up. I stand with her, being compliant, though I don't want to. As pitiful as it is, I just want to lie on the floor and cry some more.

"Shall we go sit in the library and I'll bring you some breakfast, or would you like to come out to the kitchen with me?" she asks sweetly, not releasing my hands. I assume it's because she wants to hold my attention, and sure enough, it's working—she knows what she's doing. Her kindness fills me with warmth and takes the edge off of my searing pain.

I shake my head at her. "You've done too much already," I murmur, beyond embarrassed that she's seeing me this way. I'll definitely have to get her something, a gift, for helping me.

She grins in amusement. "Mrs. Grey, please allow me to remind you that Mr. Grey pays me very well. The least I can do is make sure you get breakfast. I'm simply trying to make you and the little one as comfortable as possible," she explains carefully, thankfully not patronizing me as Christian was minutes ago. "Besides, you owe that to yourself, do you not?" I can tell she's trying hard not to overstep her boundaries, and I genuinely appreciate her fondness for Christian, Little Blip, and I.

Regardless, I look down at the floor, feeling ill at ease and self-conscious. I'm not used to being cared for so much, other than by Christian. "Kitchen," I finally murmur, relenting to her—it's not hard to say yes to this caring woman—and I look up in time to see her triumphant grin on full display.

"Please," I tack on at the last second.

"Good, good. The usual, Mrs. Grey?"

I nod, thankfully, and we find our way to eat-in kitchen. I climb gracelessly onto a stool, and Gail begins scurrying around the kitchen. Briefly, I wish I had my Blackberry so I could check my emails, knowing that my husband has probably left me a message with strict instructions to relax and to stay put. After she serves me my breakfast and I thank her, she leaves me alone, probably knowing I need some privacy to sort through my thoughts and emotions.

Christian's heated words from before come back to me. You are not to go to work today, understood? I've given Taylor implicit instructions not to transport you there, and I expect you to follow this order as well.

A frown forms on my face. Does he not know how much his words hurt? How much of an impact they have on my heart? It is so frustrating that ninety percent of the time, he knows exactly what to say to make me smile with glee, but then there's that ten percent of him that is—that's just—what? An idiot, fool, an asinine jerk?

As these negative remarks fill my mind, I force myself to think back to the conversation I had with Flynn. Benefit of the doubt. Benefit. Of. The doubt.

As much as I try not to think about earlier, I can't help it.
You’re not a prisoner, Anastasia, you know that. Why don’t you have Kate come and take you downtown to do some shopping for Junior?

His words said one thing, his hard tone another. How does he expect me to enjoy myself when he leaves me like this? Worse yet, I haven’t a clue how any of this will be resolved. I don’t know who’s to say the first word when we see each other again or even when I will see him again. I hate to think about who is to be the one to compromise, who will be the one to admit they were wrong.

I don’t know how much time has passed as I sit at the breakfast bar, picking at my granola and yogurt, my sobs lessening little by little as my body exhausts itself. It’s hard to believe with how tired I am that I’d just woken up a little while ago—or has it been hours? I just don’t know, nor do I care. I begin wondering again when I will see him next, not even knowing when his work day ends or when his breaks are. We never quite got to that this morning before World War Grey happened.

As if answering my thoughts, I hear the elevator ping, the door opening, then footsteps approaching, and I immediately tense up, my subconscious telling me to prepare to flee, seeing how fighting is not an option for my now lethargic body. Slowly—and what, cautiously?—Christian steps out of the confines of the lift and looks up at me with a woeful, remorseful glance which I immediately look away from. I simply tuck my head back into my arms on the countertop, deciding that if I had to continue to face the wrath of Christian Grey, I’d just ignore him and hope he’d get the hint to leave me alone. I’m much too wounded, much too infuriated, to face him, not to mention how my breath still hitches as I continue to cry. I don’t know what would come out of my mouth if I tried to react to whatever he has to say.

Much to my surprise, rather than another round of yelling, insults, or chastising, I feel him kneel beside my stool and place a tentative hand on the small of my back. My immediate reaction is to flinch, but he swiftly makes an attempt to reassure me in the most soothing tone I’m sure he can muster.

"Anastasia," he coos to me, his hand beginning to stroke my back in a small, gentle circle. His tone alone makes my already sore eyes fill with a fresh round of tears and makes my entire body tremble. "Hey," comes his now whispering voice. "Come here, baby. Please." And though I know that he’s on his knees beside me, crouched down with his arms extended, waiting for me to fall into them, I can’t make myself move. I’m unsure as to why, exactly—from fear, exhaustion, rage, sorrow?—but I’m only able to drown in my emotions upon the counter top.

I hear a sigh coming from Christian, but it’s not the usual angry or exasperated sigh, it’s one that mirrors my own feelings of apprehension and unhappiness, along with a hint of desperation. It’s then that I realize that he feels at least a morsel of regret about what had unfolded earlier, and it’s that realization which compels me to turn to him and throw myself into his arms, seeking—what? I’m not even sure if it’s reassurance, an apology, or just him that I want. An ironic thought drifts through my mind and leaves just as quickly as it came; this man, this maddening, impossible man who drove me to tears is also the compassionate, sensitive man that I want to hold me, kiss away my tears, and make it all better.

Christian. I want Christian. All I want is Christian.

I lie there in his arms against him, still shaking but trying my hardest to fight off my tears. The attempt is futile, of course, and I find myself placing the blame on Little Blip again, wanting to think that I’m stronger than this.

"I-I’m sorry I hit you," I manage through shuddering breaths. "Please don’t hate me."

"Of course I don't hate you, Ana," he reassures me, his voice deliberately soft and calm. He
simply holds me on the floor of the kitchen, his tender hand still rubbing my back to calm me. "I deserved it."

I shake my head vehemently. "No," I say with a fierceness that surprises me and causes me to look up at him, meeting his grey gaze. "No one deserves to be hit." Only after the words are out of my mouth do I realize how true that is, and how much it really reveals about how I honestly I loathe his old relationships and lifestyle and how he once treated me.

Never again.

After a few moments, his head nods up and down slowly in agreement. "You're absolutely right," he says quietly yet with a firmness in his voice. "It's all okay now, baby," he tells me sincerely, caressing my cheek. "I'm sorry I took it too far. I always take it too far." I can tell he's very angry at himself and that his guilt is consuming him, and this is all it takes for my own fury to melt into nothing.

"I'll stay home," I yield, finally surrendering to his desires. As soon as the words are uttered, I know I can't take them back, but after this argument that could have been avoided by simply calling off from work, I don't want to take them back.

His eyes search mine, as if looking for any trace of dishonesty or uncertainty, and he nods. "It'll be good for you," he responds, almost eagerly. "You're overworking yourself, baby. Stretching yourself so thin. I don't want that. I don't want an unhappy Ana." A small, hesitant smile graces his lips, and I can't help but return the small display of contentment.

"I know, Christian. I know you want what's best for me," I tell him, almost as if berating myself this time. "I guess I'm the stubborn one this time, huh?" I know my cheeks are a bright shade of rose as I realize the trouble I've caused today by being so difficult.

He grins a bit more. "No, Ana, that's still me. You can't steal the crown on that one," he jokes, making the mood lighter and at the same time letting me know that this wasn't my fault. "Let's make a deal, okay? I can only expect for you to stay home from work if I give you something to do, yeah?"

I contemplate this, wondering where exactly he's going. "I guess that sounds fair," I acquiesce. "Where are you going with this, Mr. Grey?" Before I can continue my questioning, he carefully and tenderly picks me up from the floor and stands, cradling me in his arms. He makes his way toward the library, and my heart smiles at this attempt at comforting me.

"We'll make a list," he explains, pressing a kiss to my forehead as he carries me. "Several lists, actually. One will be for things I expect you to do while I'm gone to assure that you won't wither away. Another for things you want to do to occupy yourself—I'll be sure to get the materials necessary to allow you to do whatever you desire. The last will be for things that we will do together to make up for the time that you're cooped up here and—" His confident tone wavers suddenly. Uh oh. "And to make up for today and for how I've treated you lately."

He reaches my beloved window seat, and he sits down with me in his lap, grabbing the plush throw blanket—which is folded neatly beside us from the last time I used it. He drapes it over the front of us, and I rest my back against his front as I take in what he's just said.

"Christian—" I begin in a sigh, scrambling to pull my thoughts together. "You don't owe me anything."

"Oh, but I do," he nearly interrupts, barely allowing me enough time to get my words out. "I've treated you poorly, Anastasia, and there's no excuse for that, I know, but I am going to try my
hardest from here on out to do better—for you. And… for our Little Blip, here." He places a tender hand on my swollen belly, and with a small smile, I place my hand over his. "I guess with my thick skull and all that it took what happened here today to get that through to me," he continues regretfully. "And for that I'm so sorry, Ana."

Oh, Fifty. My Fifty. I love this man.

I stretch my neck up to kiss him on the cheek before nestling my head back on his chest, his chin resting atop of it. "Don't be so hard on yourself, Christian, okay? Sometimes… people fight. It's all part of getting to know each other. We discover something new about one another every day, don't you see that?"

He nods, a small, reluctant smirk on his face. "You're right, as usual," he relents, and I wear a triumphant smile.

"You're not going to drive me away, if that's what you're afraid of. I didn't leave when you thought for sure that I would, when you thought what you were hiding would ruin everything, and I won't leave now—especially not now." I press his hand tighter to my stomach to emphasize my words, and he strokes his thumb across my cotton clad belly.

He sighs, and I know he's trying his hardest to believe my words. "Okay. Thank you for not being too upset with me."

"I could never stay mad at you, even if you're the most frustrating person I've ever met."

"Wow, baby. If my ego weren't so big, that would've hurt."

A huge grin blossoms on my face. Look at him, being all light hearted and teasing. It makes my heart sing with joy. "Yeah, yeah, you rich CEO."

"Hey there, little miss—that's Mister CEO to you," he retorts, and I love my adolescent-like Fifty.

"Yes, sir," I counter back at him, a giggle bubbling within me before I even know it's coming.

What a stark difference from this morning, I think to myself, but I'm not complaining one bit.

End Notes

Thoughts?

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