

Love Slave 102

102 Separated by Duty

"I know. This isn't going to be easy which is why Ace will probably decide to go on this trip no matter what. We can't let our competitor get a big jump ahead of us, right?" the woman said knowingly.

"Right. I got it..." I spoke through the phone.

"The trip is expected to last a week. You might get even busier with him being away so don't expect that it's going to be easy on you," the woman said with a small laugh.

"Excuse me? A week?" I said while unable to hide my shock.

Ace is going to be gone for a whole week?

"That's right. The client will send more details about the trip. I'll forward it to you right away when I get it so you can brief the CEO about it," the woman instructed.

"Ok...thank you..." I managed to reply vague before the line disconnected.

Ace...is going to be gone for a week?

The sudden news left me feeling quite empty inside as I stared at my phone screen with conflicted feelings. It was at that exact moment that I heard the door to his office opened. I knew without seeing him that Ace had entered his office.

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Perfect timing. I need to tell him about this upcoming business trip.

"Ace..." I called his name.

"What is it?" he replied lazily.

Ace seemed so relaxed whenever he came into his office. It always amazed me how Ace could handle all his work with ease. He didn't seem stressed or disturbed by anything at all.

"Actually, you're supposed to be on a business trip for a week starting the day after tomorrow," I told him with a small smile.

"I see...it is what it is," Ace replied before sitting down on the sofa.

"Umm...the trip also involved Chase Creatives..." I told him a little reluctantly.

His lack of reaction surprised me. That made me think that perhaps he had heard about it already from another source. However, just like most things at work, he wasn't particularly excited about anything. The only thing that seemed to perk his interest was when he got involved in leading the design and production of a commercial such as Project Alpha. Everything else he could handle flawlessly but it was clear that he lacked the passion behind it.

I stood glued to where I was as I stared at Ace and waited for him to say something else or make any comment. Ace just stared at his phone like he was reading something and never said anything else

about that business trip. A sinking feeling formed in the pit of my stomach, and I was shocked to realize that I felt disappointed.

I guess, I can't tag along with him on this trip after all. Things will probably get busy here with him being away just like the senior secretary had told me. I needed to be here to help deal with that in his absence. Before I fully understood why I felt the way I did, I had started looking forward to going on the business trip with him just like our trip the last time. However, this trip didn't have anything to do with the project that I was working on, so there was no good reason for him to take me along.

"Is something wrong?" Ace asked casually and I felt his eyes on me.

"Oh, no. It's nothing," I quickly denied.

"Do you want to come along?" Ace asked.

My eyes widened at his words. Can I really go with him?

"I can?" I asked, as hope welled up in my chest.

Ace grinned at me before looking a little apologetic. That confused me even more than before.

"Sorry, Rina. I wish that I could take you along with me as well, but I better go alone on this one," Ace replied with an apologetic smile.

Oh...

"Good luck for the trip. I'll send you more details and brief you on it later when I get the details," I told him before quickly retreating out of the room.

I cursed him silently after the door closed behind me. He was just playing with my mind just now, wasn't he?

He's so evil. He probably knew that I wanted to come along with him, and he was just testing me. Arghh!

I wanted to rip my hair out in frustration.

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It felt strange now that Ace was away on a business trip. At first, I didn't think too much of it and it didn't impact me in anyway. However, after an entire day went by without him contacting me in anyway, I found eyes shifting towards the screen of my phone more and more often. It got to the point where I could no longer concentrate at work by the end of the day.

What is he doing right now? Why hasn't he contacted me at all?

I stared intensely at the dark screen of my phone as I waited for a message or call from Ace to grace the screen. Of course, that didn't happen, and I found myself feeling even more frustrated than before. On top of worrying about Ace, I had a mountain of work that I needed to do. When the senior secretary warned me about the fact that I might get busier with Ace being away, I didn't really take her warning to heart.

Who would have thought that she was more than spot on. Ace being away meant that I had to deal with a bunch of his work as well. There were a bunch of documents that required his approval and signature. It wasn't like I had the authority to sign those documents in his place, but it was my job to deliver them to the other managers who needed to sign them in Ace's place. That kept me busy for most mornings and after dealing with that I had to focus on grinding out the detailed storyboard for Project Alpha. That was the hardest and the most energy-consuming part.