

## Love Slave 213

### 213 All He Had Given Me

I chewed on my food while keeping my gaze on Ace as I wondered if asking him about that would count as talking about work or not. Looking at it from another angle, it could count as talking about personal matters because the company's expansion plan does have quite a solid connection to the future of our relationship.

"How are things going with your plans to grow the company?" I asked while trying to keep my tone light.

"It's going well enough," he replied casually before smiling a little my way.

His attention immediately shifted to the food on his plate, and it became apparent that he did not wish to add any additional comments or details to his answer. After all the effort that I put in to ask him that one question, I didn't learn much from his response at all. While I debated with myself inside my head whether I should continue pressing him for answers on that topic or not, Ace spoke up before I had made up my mind.

"How's your mother? I guess you've been too busy with work and haven't paid her a visit since the last time that we were there, right?" Ace asked.

"Yeah...you're right. I've been too busy, and I haven't been the best daughter to her lately..." I replied regretfully.

I tried calling her whenever I had the time. When I got back to my apartment, if it wasn't too late in the night, I would try my luck and give her a call. During lunch breaks that were not too busy, I would give her a short call as well.

"We should visit her sometime soon before she thinks I'm keeping you all to myself..." Ace replied jokingly.

"I try my best to find time to call her. According to what she'd told me, she seems to be doing quite well..." I said with a smile.

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"I see. That's good..." Ace said with a satisfied nod of his head.

I smiled at him while I appreciated his thoughts and the worry and care that he had for my mother. It had been a while since we visited her. Since the storm about Claudia's pregnancy blew over, we haven't been there to visit her. I could still remember the shocked look on my mother's face when she found out that I was dating my boss and the CEO of the company that I had always dreamt of working at.

"Thanks for thinking about her..." I thanked him honestly.

"Rina..." Ace called my name and his tone suddenly sounded quite formal.

My body automatically stiffened, and I sat up a little straighter in my seat as I became more alert. I wondered what Ace wanted or had in mind for his mannerism to suddenly change like this.

"Y-Yes?" I replied questioningly.

"Can you close your eyes for a moment?" Ace asked without any further explanation.

"Umm...sure. Ok..." I mumbled while still feeling confused.

Regardless, I decided to go along with Ace's request and slowly closed my eyes. When I could no longer see, I felt slightly nervous. After a moment of silence, I heard the sound of what must have been a chair scraping against the floor, and I figured that Ace must have gotten up from his seat. Suddenly, I felt his presence close behind me and then his hand must have brushed against my hair. My heart began racing for no good reason at all.

"There you go..." Ace whispered close to my ear.

"Ace?" I called his name questioningly.

"You can open your eyes now, Rina..." Ace said softly as he rested his hands gently on my shoulders.

I opened my eyes and turned my head around to see Ace standing behind me with a bright smile on his face. Confused, I opened my mouth to ask him what that was all about when I felt something unfamiliar around my neck. I turned around and glanced down to see a necklace and pendant that I had never seen before around my neck.

"Umm...this is...?" I murmured curiously.

My hand moved to touch the pendant that hung around my collarbone. I turned to glance back at Ace with widened eyes as I pleaded to him with my eyes for him to please explain.

"This is for you. I wanted to give you a present for working so hard and keeping it together. We've been together for a while now and I guess I haven't really given you anything..." Ace said and for a moment he sounded too apologetic.

His words tugged at my heart, and I felt tears stinging the back of my eyes and then slowly welling up in my eyes. Of course, I didn't want anything from Ace at all and it definitely wasn't true that he hadn't given me anything since the time that we had been together. In fact, the complete opposite was true, Ace had given me so many valuable things. He took care of me, loved me, and taught me so many valuable things both at work and in personal life.

"That's not true at all. You see, you've given me and taught me so many things. Thank you, Ace. Thank you for this beautiful gift and everything that you've given me..." I thanked him sweetly.

I hoped that my words did not come across as too corny because that was what I honestly felt. It was unfair for him to spring a gift like this one to me. The hardness of the pendant against my fingertips made me so thankful to him.

"I'm just glad that you like it. Honestly, I didn't really know if you would like it or what I should get for you. It gave me a headache while I was deciding and choosing..." Ace confessed with a small laugh.

It was rare to see Ace so unsure of himself and slightly flustered that it brought a smile to my lips. His reaction was just so adorable, and it made me wish that I could've gotten a gift for him too. Now that I think about it, Ace's birthday was coming up next week and if I wasn't wrong, it would land on a Saturday which made it the perfect day for us to celebrate.

