

## Love Slave 242

### 242 Business Birthday

"Do you throw a big birthday party like this every year?" I asked.

"Not quite but very similar. Don't get me wrong, it's not like I enjoy throwing these parties, but it is partly required for business. It's also a way to connect with our clients and the public scene. We are a media company, so we need to stay in the spotlight as well. It would be bad if they forgot about me and the company," Ace explained.

"I see..." I murmured.

I guess he was right about that. Even from where I was standing next to Ace, I could already spot a few executives from our client companies that I recognized walking by. The hall where the party was being held was very large and there was a large stage right in front where a band was currently playing. It truly was a fancy birthday party, and I wasn't sure what I was supposed to do.

"My father always made sure to throw these kinds of parties. If you're interested, I can invite you to his birthday party as well. Trust me, it is much fancier with many more guests," Ace said before he looked off into the distance.

My eyes instantly followed his gaze and soon I spotted Ace's father engaged in an active conversation with a few other gentlemen. That was enough to convince me that this party wasn't purely for joy and fun at all. In the end, I guess Ace didn't completely lie to me when he told me that this was a business party because it might as well be.

"What am I supposed to do here?" I asked without bothering to hide my slight nervousness.

"Relax, Rina. Just hang around me and keep me from dying of boredom..." Ace replied while sounding very bored.

"You're the birthday boy today so, let's try to cheer up a little, ok?" I suggested with a smile.

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"Maybe we can go over there and get some food. At least the food and wine here are supposed to be good," Ace said as if that was all he could think of to comfort himself.

"Sure..." I murmured as I followed by his side.

As I watched Ace get us some food, I wondered if there would be anything special happening. It seemed abnormal for the party to just be a long socializing session. Ace turned to me and handed me a glass of white wine.

"Thank you..." I thanked him before taking it while making a mental note to myself to control the amount that I drank.

"This doesn't taste too bad. The smoked salmon is good..." he murmured.

I felt it very strange that Ace wasn't socializing with his guests as much. In contrast, his father was taking his job very seriously and it looked like he was striving to make the most out of this party. I guess that made sense given the exorbitant amount of money that must have gone into organizing this event.

"Is something else happening later on?" I asked in wonder.

"My father will probably give a speech. I take that back, he'll definitely give a speech because he does it every year," Ace replied.

"Oh, I see..." I said with a nod of my head.

"Well, time for me to do some work before my father cracks my head. I'm going to walk around to greet the guests a bit. Can you come along with me?" he asked.

"Of course," I said with a smile.

I remembered the promise that I made to myself to help Ace out as much as possible and be extra supportive of him today of all days because it was his birthday. With a polite smile on my lips, I walked along with Ace to greet the guests. Some were his friends and personal acquaintances while many were his business partners and their date for the night.

Ace seemed to be strictly keeping the promise that he made to his father to keep our relationship a secret. It came as a relief to me as he dutifully introduced me as his personal secretary to all the guests that we met. Ace did most of the talking while I chimed in here and there as appropriate. Most of the time, I just kept a polite and warm smile on my lips.

I had no idea how long that greeting and networking session went on for as I walked along at Ace's side from one cluster of people to the next. Although I knew that the hall was very large, it still surprised me how tiring I felt after having walked up and down the entire length of the hall a couple of times. It seemed like an endless journey and I began fading out. All guests became a blur to me, and I couldn't remember their names or faces at all. I started to wonder if Ace felt the same way as he worked hard to greet and strike up a brief conversation with his guests.

"Wow...that was...intense..." I murmured as I breathed out a long sigh at the same time.

Ace turned and flashed me a grin when he saw me pressing my hands on my waists and pushing my hips forward in a stretch. Walking around with Ace took a real toll on me and that was mostly because of the high heels that I had to wear to match the dress. My feet had started to hurt from walking around too much in heels that I wasn't used to.

"Does your feet hurt? Should we find somewhere to sit?" Ace asked.

I wanted to tell him that I was fine, but I knew that I couldn't fool Ace's sharp eyes and the fact that I had started limping a little wouldn't make my words at all convincing. Ace smiled my way when I nodded to agree to his suggestion.

"There's a table reserved for us over there. I should have told you about it earlier, sorry about that..." Ace said apologetically.

"That's fine...but is it fine if I sit with you. That table is like...right in front of the stage..." I asked hesitantly.

