

Love Slave 289

289 Unexpected Turn of Events

"No, thanks. I just dropped by because I wanted to experience the buzz and also to congratulate you on the release of your commercial. I'll pass for today. I don't think Karina would like me disturbing your dinner date," Elizabeth turned down Ace's invitation with a laugh and a dismissive wave of her hand.

I blinked rapidly in surprise as I wondered if I had misheard what she had just said. It felt like the perfect opportunity for her to spend more time with Ace, but she didn't hesitate to turn down his invitation at all. The more I tried to understand what she was thinking or what she really wanted, the more I got confused. Regardless of the reason behind her decision to turn Ace's invitation down, I was thankful that she would be leaving us alone soon.

"Thank you for coming," Ace thanked her with a smile.

"I'm not exactly doing this for you. Enjoy your date!" she replied perhaps a little too cheerfully.

Just like that, Elizabeth Chase walked away while waving a hand over her head without looking back. I stared at her back until she got swallowed up by the crowd of people and disappeared from my view. My mind still struggled to understand what had just taken place. Just like a rapid whirlwind, Elizabeth suddenly appeared and then left us.

"I guess even Elizabeth was interested and excited enough about the launch of our commercial for her to turn up here," Ace said as he came to stand right by my side.

I wanted to scream at him and ask him how she happened to turn up here but then I thought better of it and decided to hold my tongue. She was gone and it felt like there were other better things to do now that I still had time with Ace. I bit down hard on my tongue before tearing my gaze away from where Elizabeth had disappeared into the crowd to turn my attention back to Ace.

"Do you want to go to dinner, or do you want to go back to the office?" I asked curtly.

"You don't look like you're in the mood for dinner. Do you want to go back to the office?" Ace replied with his own guess of what I wanted.

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It was probably my fault for snapping at him. Despite my efforts to hide my anger, I guess it did show after all. I let out a long sigh with my eyes casted down on the ground. The crowd around us was making so much noise that it was frankly getting harder to have a conversation there without yelling.

"Let's go back to the office. Maybe we can go out drinking to celebrate with the others after the launch," I suggested.

"Sure..." Ace replied like he had absolutely no preference.

I started making my way through the crowd while cursing Elizabeth for her ill-timed appearance and my inability to remain calm in her presence.

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The ride back to the office felt awkward although we were not supposed to be fighting. Ace didn't seem so bothered by Elizabeth's appearance and he didn't seem to care much about the fact that I was disturbed. I was so conflicted about his lack of reaction and then realized that perhaps I couldn't blame him while I was trying to act normal and fine at the same time. Everything was such a mess inside of my own head and I started regretting my decision to go back to help out at the office. I doubt that I would be of any help to anyone in the state that my mind was in.

"Do you think Julianna's entire team is still in?" I asked because I couldn't think of anything else to start a conversation with him.

After the almost silent ride, we finally arrived at the office, and I could get out of the suffocating enclosed space of the car's interior.

"I would bet on it. I think other members from the other teams will be there too," Ace replied.

Julianna and her team had booked out a very large meeting room to act as the war room for the launch of the commercial. Although it was past working hours, I wasn't surprised that the war room was still packed with people when Ace and I walked in. Everyone looked up and seemed quite surprised to see us.

"Ace! I didn't think that you would be here..." Julianna exclaimed as she stood up from her seat and approached us.

"I didn't think so either, but my secretary kept nagging me to do my job properly and so here I am..." he replied jokingly.

"Well, I guess...good job Karina!" Julianna cried out happily.

Despite the supposedly stressful environment, Julianna seemed to be in a better mood than she usually was in and that made me wonder if there was some good news that we had missed out on.

"Is everything going well?" I asked in a small voice.

"Absolutely! Everything is fine just as expected. Actually, everything is going so well that it's starting to get boring..." Julianna said before she started laughing.

I watched as she headed back to her seat where she started staring into the screen of the monitor on the table.

"Julianna wants to go out drinking already..." a member of her team chimed in with a laugh.

"Shut up. Don't ruin my perfect image in front of the CEO!" Julianna snapped at her team member before turning to smile at Ace.

"Juliana likes to drink...umm...quite a lot after clearing some big milestone..." Ace whispered to me in explanation.

"Oh...I see..." I whispered back.

I did not expect that from someone like her at all. Then again, I guess everyone has their own personal life outside of work and a human side that may not match with their persona at work. The overly strict

and controlling Julianna probably had a side to her life that I didn't know either. Thinking of that, I also had a side of my life that I was actively hiding from everyone as well. I glanced over at Ace as he sat down on one of the chairs at the large meeting table and thought that he contributed to a major chunk of the secret that I was hiding.