

## Love Slave 44

### 44 Project Alpha

Note: None of the companies and organizations in this novel are real and does not intend to refer or reference any real existing organizations. This is purely a work of fiction.

It goes without saying that if we were to lose this competition, then our market share will probably be eaten up by our competitors, especially whoever happens to emerge as the winner. This was the unspoken truth that everyone in the room understood including myself.

“Now, this is what you’ve all been waiting for. The theme and the non-profit organization that we’re supposed to be creating our commercial for,” Julianna said before she paused for effect.

When she pressed the clicker button to go to the next slide, people gasped before low murmurs started filling up the room. I had a very similar reaction to the other people in the room. This is just...brutal...

I winced and closed my eyes for a moment to collect myself before I gather my strength to look up at the screen again. Julianna had started playing a video clip that showcased dogs in very poorly managed and unhygienic cages before the clip quickly went on to show dogs being butchered with a knife. Then scene that proceeded to show the skinning process and then how the meat was then displayed and sold in wet markets.

“Dog meat trade...” I whispered to myself in shock.

“Just as you’ve probably surmised from the video just now, the theme for this year’s competition is raising awareness to end the dog meat trade globally. The non-profit organization that the foundation has chosen to support is W.R.E, which is the leading organization advocating for animal rights. In recent years, this organization has been focused on leading efforts to end the dog meat trade and the one of the key levers that they have identified as important to the cause is to raise public awareness regarding the issue and that is where we come in,” Julianna explained smoothly and flawlessly.

Even her presentation skills were flawless, no wonder she is the star from the marketing department. After that Julianna went through the expected output which was a commercial that would help raise awareness regarding the issue as well as raise donations to support the cause. Once Julianna returned to her seat after wrapping up her presentation, everyone’s attention turned to Ace to see what he had to say.

“It’s an interesting theme for sure and it’s going to be a challenging one with public opinion on both sides of the fence and a bunch of people who are just sitting on the fence. Plus, I don’t think that we can achieve anything without interacting with the dogs, so that’s going to be fun for sure. Needless to say, we’re going to have to do everything to win this...without fail...” Ace said determinedly as he stared at his fellow colleagues.

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I gulped at the intensity of his glare and the fire of determination that burned within them. He’s so serious, passionate, and motivated about this that it made me start to feel the same way. I felt his energy and his feelings in every cell of my body, and I was certain that the other people seated at the meeting table felt the same way.

“Some tasks have been assigned as displayed on the screen. Just think about how you would approach this and give it your best...” Ace said very calmly yet encouragingly before the meeting came to an official close.

Still slightly stunned from the unexpected weight of the project just now, the real purpose of me being here almost slipped my mind. Ace was already making his way out of the door. If I don't follow him now, I'm going to lose him...

Quickly, I got out of my seat and ran out of the door. I could feel the eyes of the other people on my back, but I didn't have the time to care much about that right now. I need to catch up to Ace no matter what.

“Excuse me!” I called after him in the hallway.

Judging from the direction that he was headed; I could guess that he was making his way back to his office on the other side of the floor. At the sound of my voice, Ace halted in his steps before he turned around to face me.

“Rina...” Ace said my name softly with a curious look on his face.

The way my nickname rolled off his tongue sounded so seductive. Wait...

I shook my head slightly to clear my head while Ace continued to look at me curiously. I had so many things that I wanted to talk to him about.

“We're in public...please don't call my name like that...” I mumbled a complaint.

“Why not? Other people can call you by your pet name but I can't?” Ace said with a hint of irritation in his voice.

This isn't what I needed to talk to him about at all. What am I doing?

“Umm...never mind that for now. I need to talk to you...” I said before I got sidetracked again.

“For now...huh?” Ace said before he chuckled at me.

Shit. If I don't concentrate, I'll get throw off topic again. I didn't come here to talk to him about his usage of my nickname while we are in public.

“Sir, I really need to talk to you...” I began again.

“I get it. Come with me to my office, I don't like talking in the hallway...” Ace said curtly.

Without another word, he turned on his heels and continued walking down the hallway. Why is he walking so fast? My heels clacked against the floor as I tried my best to keep up with him.

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Once we were inside his office, Ace gestured for me to take the seat opposite his at his worktable before he locked the door behind us. The clicking sound of the lock made me feel slightly panicked but Ace seemed as calm and collected as ever as he took his seat behind his table and rested his chin on his fist.

His hazel eyes narrowed slightly as he stared at me from across the table. For a moment, I wondered what he saw when he looked at me.

“The thing is...” I began saying.