

Love Slave 109

109 Getting Real

"Yes, it's a choice you must make between showing one person through various stages of life or to show different people in each stage. The former, as you said, shows the flow of time much better. The latter, provides a better sense of inclusivity because you can show people of different genders, race, and demographics," Ace continued to explain.

"In this case, we should probably go with your suggestion to capture the flow of time," I said decisively.

"Correct. If I were you, I'd do that," Ace replied without hesitation.

"Thank you, Ace. Oh...and welcome back," I said before showing him one of my best smiles.

Ace smiled back as his hand reached out to pat the top of my head gently.

"It's good to be back..." Ace said lazily.

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Time surely flew by and the first pitch presentation where the contesting companies would present their story board to the committee was already in two weeks' time. We had less than 10 working days to put everything together. Having a great storyline and an appealing storyboard was one thing. Having an outstanding pitch presentation to showcase those two elements was an entirely different matter altogether.

"Should we invest and have a sample commercial made just to give the committee members a taste of the real thing?" Jeremy suggested.

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"It's not uncommon for companies to do that. Our competitors may have something along those lines to show," Richard quickly agreed.

"It's going to be difficult to arrange for something like that in two weeks' time but it's not entirely impossible," Ace stated as his face looked thoughtful.

Shooting a mockup commercial was difficult and also costs a lot of money. There were also risks associated with this investment. Just like most investments, it was high risk and high return. If we got it right and the committee members are impressed by it, then we're definitely going to score some bonus points. However, if they hated it then the damage might be beyond control.

I glanced over at Ace's thoughtful face as he seemed to be contemplating the pros and cons of having the mockup commercial.

"Unless something is terribly wrong with our storyboard, I doubt we'll get knocked out from the first rounds of presentation. It's probably better to invest in the mockup for the later rounds when we're much surer on the storyboard and all the details. Presenting something half-ass might backfire especially right now when we don't have all the details of the scenes in place," Ace stated his decision with solid reasoning.

Everyone, including myself, nodded in agreement and that was how the meeting came to an end. Everyone got up from their seat and headed for the door immediately. I could tell that the project had entered another phase and that demanded even more effort and concentration from all team members. I better work hard on my part too. We can't mess up this first pitch presentation no matter what.

"Rina..." Ace called my name.

His voice snapped me out of my thoughts. I blinked my eyes rapidly to clear my mind before turning to smile a little at him.

"You looked so stressed just now. Is everything ok?" Ace asked with apparent concern.

I guess I must have looked very worried as I thought about the work just now. There was certainly more pressure to get everything right now that the presentation was just around the corner. This was also my first time getting involved in a such an important project like this and the pressure was clearly getting to me.

"I'm fine. I was just thinking about the upcoming presentation," I replied.

"There's no need to stress about it. With the storyboard that we have, everything should be a breeze," Ace said with confidence.

I knew that the storyboard that we had was definitely above standard for sure. It was unique and had a message that should resonate with many people. However, something just made me feel uneasy about all this. Not knowing what it was, I decided that it must have just been my nerves.

"How about we go out for dinner? Just you and me..." Ace suggested invitingly.

"Umm...I have work to do so..." I mumbled hesitantly.

"You can save it for tomorrow. Just come along," Ace said insistently.

Dinner with Ace...

I nodded my head a little in agreement and Ace rewarded me with such a charming smile that made me think that I definitely made the right decision.

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Ace surely picked the right day to invite me out for dinner with him. Today was one of those rare days when Ace's meetings don't run late into the night. However, Ace's final meeting of the day wasn't in the office. He had to attend a meeting at one of the client's headquarters and because of that, I was told to wait for him right at the building entrance for his return.

After clearing up my work for the day, I immediately headed to the spot where Ace was supposed to pick me up. I was anxious and I didn't want to keep him waiting. As a result of that, I arrived at our appointment place early. I didn't mind getting there a little earlier, though.

It was the end of the working day and many people walked by on their way home while I stood and waited for Ace's arrival. Without anything to do while I waited, my mind began to wander. Not surprisingly, my mind finally settled on thinking about Ace and the relationship between us.

The project was making good progress and that was definitely a plus. Everything seemed to be progressing well and that applied to my relationship with Ace as well. Although he had asked me to be his 'girlfriend' multiple times, I had never said yes. Honestly, I was still confused about my feelings towards him. I did enjoy having sex with him, but I wasn't sure if I was in love with him. To make matters worse, I was quite certain that he wasn't in love with me.