

Love Slave 134

134 Trial and Verdict

"How do I do that?" I asked.

"I don't think Elizabeth is willing to publicize the fact that her husband was directly involved in stealing confidential information and she would probably appreciate it if you didn't mention it to anyone. I guess keeping it vague would be better..." Ace advised.

Oh, right. I did not anticipate how Elizabeth wanted this all to play out.

This case was a complex one. It was the prime example of how one mistake led to another. How one lie also led to another.

I stared at Ace and nodded my head softly. Ace was right. During the entire press conference, Elizabeth never mentioned Kyle as the culprit. She just said that her company was guilty but never highlighted her husband's involvement. I was starting to wonder what Kyle did that made him deserve a woman like Elizabeth and then I hoped that he would suffer severely for the problems that he's caused all of us.

After snapping out of my thoughts, I looked straight at the panel of board members who were eagerly waiting for me to start telling my tale.

"This all happened because of my negligence to safeguard the company's confidential information. As a result of my carelessness, Chase Creatives managed to get their hands on a version of my storyboard that I was working on as part of Project Alpha. My first version of the storyboard was stolen and used in Chase Creatives presentation at the first round of the competition. Although we had an updated version of the storyboard that we were certain was better than the first iteration, there were too many similarities between the two for us to present the storyboard as planned. That put our company at a disadvantage, and we ended up presenting the backup storyboard instead," I summarized what happened.

"So, you admit that it is your fault that this whole trouble ensued?" a man from the panel asked.

"Yes, Sir. I don't have any excuse for myself, and I am willing to take on any punishment as you see fit. I am sincerely sorry for all the trouble that I have caused to my colleagues, the project, and the company," I apologized directly from my heart.

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"It seems like Chase Creatives just hosted a press conference to address this issue. They seemed to have admitted to their wrongdoings in stealing the storyboard and have withdraw from the competition completely. What do you think of this?" a woman asked.

"After finding out that our storyboard had been stolen, our CEO who also leads Project Alpha got in touch with the CEO of Chase Creatives to address the issue. Due to her proud sense of ethics, Elizabeth Chase did some investigation and found out that the story presented to her was indeed stolen from our company. I truly appreciate the fact that she owed up to her company's mistake and I am thankful that our company can revert back to using our original storyboard. However, that doesn't mean that I think that I should be cleared of all faults," I replied truthfully.

"I see. That is all the questions that I have," the woman said.

The man who asked the first question just nodded. He too seemed to be satisfied without the need to ask any more questions. The other board members also nodded to signal that they didn't have anything else to ask.

"Are you saying that you had no ill intentions of leaking the confidential information to our competitors and that everything was just an accident?" Ace asked.

His sharp gaze fell on me, and my body froze in place. I could tell that Ace was serious and his question demanded for the truth.

"Yes. I swear that I did not intent to leak any information. I am loyal to this company. It had always been my dream to work here, and it hurts me so much that I have caused damage to this company's work and reputation. Everything that happened was an accident based on my poor judgement and negligence," I replied firmly.

"I see. That is all," Ace replied dismissively.

"Please give us a few minutes to discuss amongst ourselves. Please wait in front of the room. We will call you in when we have reached a decision," the woman informed me politely.

"Thank you very much," I said just as politely before excusing myself and exiting the room.

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The next 'few minutes' that the disciplinary board needed to reach a verdict on my case felt like an eternity for me as I stood in front of the door and waited. There was nothing that I could do but wait. I didn't even dare pray for a miracle because I believed that no such thing existed, and even if it did, I didn't want it to be wasted on someone like me. I truly deserved what was coming my way. That was what I truly believed.

Suddenly, the door opened and the woman from before smiled at me politely before inviting me back into the room. It seemed like the disciplinary board had arrived at a decision and I was also ready to hear it. This is it. My future at this company rests on this moment and their decision.

"Miss Miller, a decision has been made on your case," the woman began saying.

I took in a breath and held it as I pursed my lips tightly into a thin line. I did promise myself that I wouldn't pray for myself. My heartbeat so loudly in my chest and I wondered if the other people in the room could hear it as well. Instead of going on with the verdict, the woman gestured for Ace to take over.

Ace is going to delivery the verdict for my case?

"For this case, the disciplinary board has decided that Miss Millar is in fact at fault for the leak of the company's confidential information. However, with evidence and admittance of foul play from the competing company, it is believed that Miss Miller did not have any intention of disclosing the confidential information. However, Miss Miller is still guilty of neglecting her duty to dutifully protect the company's intellectual property..." Ace said as he read from the paper in front of him.

