

Love Slave 336

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"You did it, Karina!" she yelled so that her voice would reach me.

I quickly made my way over to where she was standing with a few of my other colleagues from my old department. It felt like a lifetime ago when Ace showed me the recommendation letter that she wrote to him regarding my transfer. Although it may not have been the start of my relationship with Ace, I was certain that the letter that she had written to him was one of the things that brought Ace and me together. She probably had no idea how much impact that letter would have on my life even beyond my professional career.

"Thank you! Thank you for all that you've done for me. Thank you for all the opportunities and guidance that you've given me throughout the years," I thanked her wholeheartedly as I felt tears welling up in my eyes.

"You did well. I knew that you could do it. Congratulations!" she replied with a few nods of her head.

She looked like a proud parent, and I was so thrilled that I could make her feel that way. Perhaps I wasn't the best daughter to my real mother because I didn't have that many chances growing up to see such a proud look on my mother's face. Hopefully, from now on, I'll have many other opportunities to make her feel proud to have me as her daughter.

"Congratulations! We were cheering for you the whole way," one of my colleagues said with a bright smile before others showered me with words of congratulations and blessing.

"Thank you. Of course, I couldn't have done this alone. It's all thanks to Ace and everyone on the team as well," I replied humbly.

My eyes scanned the crowd with the hope of spotting Ace, but he was nowhere to be seen. My heart sank when I thought that he might have run off somewhere instead of heading back to the office. He was aware of the team's plan to come back to the office to celebrate with everyone just like the previous years. After exchanging a few more words, I succeeded in excusing myself after telling them that I needed to meet up with my team members.

It was half true because technically Ace was also on team Project Alpha.

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I quickly entered the office where the lobby was also filled with people in full party mode. It was frankly a mess, and the lobby was beyond recognition compared to what it normally looked and felt like during normal office hours on regular working days. As quickly as possible, I slipped through the crowd and entered the elevator.

Ace might be in his office...

Although I knew that his phone was probably still switched off, I tried calling him again and again just to find out that hard work doesn't always pay off. By the time I stood in front of Ace's personal office, I was convinced that his office was empty. I felt like a fool after thinking that I should have gone back to his

place to check. These two places just felt too obvious and when I thought a little longer about it, I realized that Ace wouldn't be there if he wanted to hide away.

The real question was, what exactly is he hiding away from?

I shook my head to drive that thought away. No matter how hard I thought about it, Ace didn't have a good reason to run away from anything or from anyone. His sudden disappearance didn't fit his character at all. I yanked the door to his office open to find that Ace wasn't inside just as I had expected.

"Where did you go?" I muttered to myself as my frustration boiled up inside of me.

At that point, I wasn't sure whether I was more worried about him, or I was just flat out angry at him for disappearing on me. I raced back to the elevator while giving Ace another call. By the time I was back in the lobby where everyone was still partying, Ace had not answered my call. I cursed under my breath before threading through the crowd of people toward the exit of the building.

"You're leaving already?"

I turned to see Jeremy approaching me from the side. He had a surprised look on his somewhat red face. It was clear that just like everyone else, he had started drinking.

"Yeah. I'm not feeling so well so I'm going to leave now..." I replied with the first excuse that came into my head.

"Oh, that's too bad. Get well soon and get home safe," Jeremy replied before waving a hand at me.

"Thanks. Don't get too drunk," I replied teasingly.

Since Ace probably wasn't in the office building, there was no reason for me to be there. Drinking the night away and partying wasn't how I planned to spend the evening anyways. I hailed a cab and gave Ace a few more calls on the way back to his place. It didn't bother me much when none of my calls went through because that was exactly what I had expected.

When I stepped out of the elevator into his place, that familiar feeling that I had when I stood in front of his office came back to me and I knew without opening my mouth to call out to him that I was the only person in the vast suite.

"Ace! Ace! Ace!" I yelled his name as I went around checking from room to room.

I felt like a very big fool going around his place and yelling his name when I already knew that he wasn't home. Enough time had passed so he could have made it home way before me if he wanted to. I flopped down onto the sofa when I started to run out of any good and creative ideas of where he could be. I didn't think that the fact that he owned many properties would turn out into such bad news. It definitely made it hard for me to look for him. I didn't know where all his places were, and it didn't help that he could be staying in any hotel in the city.