

Love Slave 86

86 Leaning On Him

“...Yes, of course,” I replied as I tried to keep my voice from shaking.

We haven’t even gone inside yet so I knew that this was nothing. Being a dog and animal lover did not work in my favor at all for this case because it made me feel more sensitive to what I was about to see than normal. However, this was work and don’t people say that understanding the problem is the first step to solving it?

Suddenly, a man with grey hair approached the gate. Rung quickly greeted the man in their local language and the man laughed carefreely as he unlocked the gates for us and welcomed us in. Ace and I both smiled at the man in greeting before we were led inside. There was a small unkept yard between the gate and the main building. The place seemed to resemble more of a single-story warehouse than a building and it was clear that that was where the dogs were being kept.

Rung continued conversing with the man who I assumed was the owner of the farm before he turned to smile at us reassuringly. We knew that he would soon translate things to us, so we spent the time just looking around the place. The sounds of dogs barking filled our ears even before we entered the warehouse. I flinched at the thought of just imagining how many dogs were kept in there.

The owner opened the door to the warehouse, and I found myself inside a dog meat farm for the first time of my life. The scene in front of me gave me goosebumps and a sense of depression like I have never felt before in my life. Countless dogs were locked up in crowded cages that seemed too small for them to share. Endless rows of cages lined the warehouse, and many were stacked on top of each other to ensure that the warehouse could fit as many cages and dogs as possible. The smell was something that I knew I would not forget for a long time even though I truly wanted to. There were many staff walking around the place busy with their work of feeding, cleaning, and other activities that I couldn’t quite comprehend.

“So, this is where they keep the dogs. I asked him and most of the dogs are captured and sold here while they also raise some just for sale. Every week or twice a week, an agent will come with a truck to pick up the dogs. They sell it live, none of the dogs are butchered here,” Rung explained as he waved with his hand for us to follow him deeper into the warehouse.

I felt like I had seen more than enough from where I was standing and my feet felt rooted to the ground as I hesitated to take a single step forward. Ace must have sensed my extreme discomfort before he gave my hand a comforting squeeze.

“Rina...you don’t have to go in if you don’t want to. Do you want to wait outside?” Ace asked as he bent down until his face was at my level.

I could see the care in his hazel brown eyes as his brows drew together in concern for me. Honestly, I didn’t want to take another step forward into that place at all. However, I also knew that that was no good. I came all the way here, I can’t exactly back out now just because I was taken aback by seeing the harsh reality in front of me.

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“Can you wait a moment please, Rung. I’ll take Rina back outside...” Ace turned to tell Rung.

I probably looked like such a fool and a coward. This is for work. I came here exactly for this. If I don’t do this, how are we going to produce an award-winning commercial. Pain shot through my lower lip, and I realized that I had started chewing hard on my lip.

“No! I’m fine. I’ll go in with you,” I told him while trying to keep my voice from shaking from fear.

“Are you sure?” Ace asked.

“Yes. Let’s go...” I replied before I could change my mind.

Ace seemed hesitant but decided to lead me inside after taking my hand into this. His warm hand around mine felt comforting and I appreciated his presence close to me. Without realizing it at first, I had probably started relying on Ace as a source of emotional support. Rung was already in the center of the warehouse conversing animatedly with the farm’s owner. He seemed to be enjoying this trip and this job of his a lot.

“This way guys!” Rung called out to us as he waved a hand above his head.

“Anything interesting?” Ace asked in wonder.

I pressed my body close to Ace as I tried to control my own fears. This isn’t the time to freak out, I told myself repeatedly. The dogs in the cages barked loudly at us as their eyes stared and glared at us. It took a lot of self-control to keep my mind from wandering into the dark thoughts that these dogs will soon turn into meat. The thought made my body shiver. Ace must have sensed my fear because he wrapped an arm around my waist and started stroking the side of my waist.

I turned to smile at him a little to ensure him that I was fine. Rung continued talking to the farm owner for a little while longer before turning to address us and I knew that our briefing was about to start.

“Alright. So, there are around 500-ish dogs kept here. Every week or so they sell around half of those. A trader will come to collect the dogs via trucks and then they will be led to a butchery sight where the animals are processed. The meat is then distributed to various local markets across the countries based on orders,” Rung explained without going into the gory details.