

## The Ace at the Apex by Nine Linked Rings Chapter 5

### Chapter 5 The Lion Rises

They then suddenly heard a folder being slammed against a glass door. The sound was not loud but it immediately quieted the commotion.

The noise was followed by the appearance of a woman in a white, short-sleeved, business suit and skirt holding onto a folder. As she walked in, she chided, “Are all of you so free? Good chat huh? All right then, I’ll be withholding your pay for this morning except for Javier’s. We can use that money to organize a tea party next time, so you all can chat as you snack!”

It was Jade Odell, a 27-year-old with a pretty face and a rocking body. The tight-fitting business suit somehow looked sexy on her. Nonetheless, no one dared to try anything funny with her because she was the general manager of their company, Beacon Tires.

Upon being criticized, the employees promptly ducked their heads and swallowed back the indignation they felt no matter how resentful they were. The most they could do was grumble in their mind, “This is all that lowlife Javier’s fault!”

Jade’s gaze raked through everyone and finally landed on Javier who was still packing up. She rapped the glass door with the folder in her hand once again and said, “Javier, come to my office.”

As the situation stood, Javier wanted to go to the woman to put in his resignation as well, so he dropped what he was doing and followed her to her office.

As he walked into the jasmine-scented room, Jade gestured for Javier to sit and picked up a glass to fetch him some water. The water dispenser

was a little low so the woman had to bend over a little to fill up the glass, causing the back of her skirt to stretch over her perky bottom.

Javier fought back his wandering thoughts as he accepted the glass of water from Jade with a curt thanks when she sauntered over to him. Taking a sip, he heard the woman's question from the opposite of the desk. "You're going to quit?"

Javier put the glass down and nodded at the woman who was sitting in the large swivel chair. He had been packing his personal items earlier. It was no surprise that Jade guessed that he intended to quit. But Javier also guessed that Jade must have misunderstood that he was quitting because he could not take the taunts from his coworkers any longer.

"My resignation has nothing to do with my coworkers, I—"

"I understand," Jade nodded and cut him off before he could finish with his explanation. "They've crossed the line with what they've said to you. But I hope you understand something, Javier. You live for yourself. Don't mind what others think of you. If you care about what others say too much, you'll become one of them in order to blend in."

Javier was surprised. He did not expect his usually aloof and pretty boss to be talking about this with him today. He was grateful and he acknowledged what Jade said but he was not resigning from his job because of the herd of rabbits out there. He was about to speak up to try to explain himself again but Jade beat him to it.

"I know that you and Selena are married and that you work very hard. Working in the office during the day and sending food delivery during the night. They don't appreciate people like you, but as your boss, I do.

"I like your determination and effort, as well as your commendable sales in the company. So before you formally put in your resignation, I have

made a decision that I want to tell you about first. I've decided to promote you to the position of Director of the Planning Department, with a monthly salary starting from 1,100 dollars.

“The position will keep you up over time and drain your brainpower, so it's only for those with great ambition and tenacity. I don't think there's anyone in the company who fits the post better than you, so I hope that you can stay and produce even better results in this important position.

“It'll elevate your individual skill set and allow you to leave the delivery gig to concentrate on your job and unleash your full potential. Most importantly, you could use this to silence your coworkers out there, don't you agree?”

The slight quirk on the corner of Jade's lips reflected her confidence. She was convinced that her persuasion would definitely make Javier stay and even move him emotionally! To her disappointment, the man's reply burst her air of confidence with a loud bang.

“Thank you for the offer, Ms. Odell. But I only have one goal in mind coming to the office today, and that is to quit.”

Jade was puzzled. She believed in her own judgment. There should not be any reason for Javier to reject her. She was about to pursue the matter when her phone rang. She picked up to check who was calling and got up to answer the call by the window. Javier could not hear what the caller said but he heard Jade loud and clear.

“Mr. Warnock, you can't play me like this. I've checked with you on multiple occasions before this and you promised to invest. I've poured everything I have and now you're telling me this? It's not quite appropriate, don't you think so?”

“Yes, we didn’t sign a contract but isn’t this based on the trust we’ve established from our previous collaboration? Now that you’re saying you don’t want to invest? This is unacceptable.

“Mr. Warnock, you... Hello? Hello? Mr. Warnock? B\*stard!”

With a loud thud, Jade’s phone met the floor and the screen cracked. The next instant, Jade who had recovered from her fury quickly went to pick up the device. She tapped the screen to light it up and tried scrolling before heaving a long relieved sigh. “Thank goodness, it’s just the screen protector that cracked.”

She was not concerned about the phone breaking as much as the fact that she would not be able to contact Albert Warnock if that happened. As she stood up to leave, Jade instructed Javier who was in the office, “Don’t go yet. Wait for me, I’ll be back.”

As he watched the woman leave in a hurry, Javier’s mind began to turn. He had heard about the matter. Their company was starting a new project and was lacking funds, so Jade had gotten Albert to invest in it. The man had promised rather swiftly but glossed over the contract and made Jade put in her money during the early phase based on the trust they had built from previous collaborations. Now that things had come to a critical juncture, Javier realized that Albert must have had an ulterior motive to back out so suddenly. Javier did not have to think hard about the motive. It was either for Jade’s money or her beauty—or both.

He contemplated and decided to give Jade a hand. It was not just because the woman had offered him a word of encouragement today, it was also because she was capable and strong-willed. A few hundred thousand dollars was nothing to Javier anyway.

Javier ran after Jade, hoping to stop her, but the woman had already stepped into the elevator and was heading down the building when he got to the door. By the time he got to the ground floor, Jade would probably have already driven several kilometers away, so he went back to wait in her office.

When Javier returned to the office, an angry mob came at him.

“Javier, not bad... You got on the boss’ good side and caused all of us to have our salaries deducted. We were just joking. Did you have to go after us so relentlessly?”

“Exactly! We’ve been coworkers for almost two years now. Where did the rapport go? If I were to spend two years with a dog, it would at least wag at me when it sees me—you’re less than a dog!”

“Whatever. Javier, you need to reimburse me for this morning’s pay cut. Try to get yourself out of it and you can try my fists!”

“Javier Kersey, you piece of trash. I’m ashamed on behalf of your parents!”

Rabbit after rabbit pranced in front of him as they berated him selfishly and dragged his parents into the insult once again. They finally provoked the lion enough to rise. Javier was now determined to invest in the company and he would make sure that he was the major shareholder.

And when that time came, oh, he could not wait to see if another rabbit would dare provoke him.