

## Love Slave 136

### 136 Another Storm

Finally, we decided to settle for a safer choice of going out to a newly opened fusion restaurant that I wanted to try. I was relieved that in the end, Ace decided to drop his idea of visiting my mother, at least, for now.

It would hurt me financial to not get my bonus and promotion, but it was definitely better than losing my job. In a way, I had Ace to really thank for that. I doubted that he would be willing to take much credit for it, so I didn't verbalize to him over and over again how thankful I was that he saved my ass this time around. However, I did make a mental note to do something for him in return. As he liked to say, there was a right time for everything.

That night after dinner, Ace drove me back to my place. It felt like the calm after a storm had just past. After the dust had settled somewhat about the information leakage, I felt like we had some down time before we needed to jump into working on Project Alpha in full force. Now that we got our storyboard back too, it felt like we were really on track to win the competition. Everything seemed to be looking up and I bet that even Ace did not foresee what was waiting to greet us right at my apartment.

Just when one storm had past another one arrived right at my door. Literally.

"Is something going on?" I asked when we arrived close to my apartment building.

We got close but there was no way for us to get any closer to it. My eyes took in the large crowd of people surrounding my apartment building along with their cars. Who are these people and why are they gathered here?

"Good question..." Ace muttered.

On closer inspection, I could tell that these people were reporters and cameramen. A sinking feeling filled my stomach. Did something bad happen to something or someone in my building?

"Did someone...get hurt or something?" I asked.

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"Only one way to find out," Ace replied.

"You stay here in the car; I'll step out for a bit to ask them. They can't just block the entire building entrance like this. I mean, they're not the police or anything. They're causing the residents so much trouble..." I complained heatedly.

These people really should learn to respect the other residents living in the building. They had nothing to do with anything, yet they had to suffer. It's just so unfair!

"What is going on? I live here and I need to park the car and get to my apartment," I demanded to know.

The man turned around to see me and then his eyes widened.

"It's her! She's the one in the photos!" the man shouted.

His loud voice quickly caught the attention of the other people gather in front of the building. When they turned around to face me, I realized that they were no normal people. These people had microphones in their hands while some had cameras and video recorders.

They're reporters for sure.

But...why are so many of them here?

What's that about me being in the photos? What photos?

"Miss Karina Miller, please explain what is going on in these photos?"

"Are you and Mr. Hills dating?"

"We heard that you are supposed to just be his secretary so can you please explain these photos?"

The reporters started ganging up on me while they fired their questions at me in rapid succession. It was too much for me to handle and frankly, I had no idea what on earth they were talking about. A woman shoved a printed photo into my face and my eyes widened.

The photo was taken from the recent party that I attended with Ace. For some reason, it looked like Ace held me tightly in his arms while he was kissing me. Did something like that happen?

Regardless of the truth, the photo made us look extremely like lovers in the middle of a passionate and loving moment. Too shocked to respond to their questions or wrap my mind around what was truly going on, I stood there completely speechless.

Suddenly, I felt someone grabbing my wrist and then I was pulled backwards.

"Ace..." I whispered his name as I glanced up to see his face behind me.

The reporters went wild when they spotted that Ace was with me. The flashes from the cameras were blinding as the cameramen took countless photos of us. Without saying a word to me, Ace pulled me back towards the car. That made me snap out of my shock and quickly followed him back into the car.

Ace drove the car away from my apartment building while I looked back in disbelief at the large crowd of reporters.

It became clear that going back to my place wasn't a viable option for us with all the reporters there waiting for us. While Ace continued driving, I realized that I didn't know where we were headed. However, there were more important and pressing questions that I needed to ask him.

"What was that all about just now?" I asked, still confused.

"Reporters and the paparazzi," Ace replied without looking my way.

His eyes were focused on the road and that made sense considering the speed at which he was driving.

"They showed me a photo..." I began saying but Ace cut in before I could complete my sentence.

"Don't over think it..." Ace warned lightly.

“But...we look like we were kissing in the photo. It was probably taken during our dance at the party...” I said softly as my voice shook slightly.

“It doesn’t matter...” Ace said dismissively.

“But it does matter! If that gets out...” I exclaimed before trailing off.

I didn’t even want to imagine what would happen to us if those photos leaked out. Perhaps it was already too late to be worried about that. Just when I thought that life could return back to its usual peace, this just had to explode right in our faces.

This is all my fault. I should have been more careful when we are together in a public event like that. Why did I let my guard down?