

## Love Slave 147

### 147 Keeping Our Secret

"If it were up to me, I'll just come out and announce that Rina and I are indeed in a relationship. However, I know that it's not completely up to me..." Ace replied confidently before his tone darkened.

Ace's words made me feel a little giddy inside. He reached for my hand and gave it a little supporting squeeze before he turned to smile at me. I returned his smile naturally as warmth flooded my chest. It never occurred to me that Ace was this serious about the connection that we shared. He would go as far as to announce it to everyone. That just sounded so reckless and crazy to me but at the same time I felt strangely happy about it.

The Chairman's eyes shifted to me for a brief moment as if to gauge my reaction or to see if I wanted to voice my opinion on this. Honestly, I wasn't sure what would be best. As for me, since we were not formally dating, I didn't think that it was right for us to expose our relationship like that. It would probably lead to many complications and problems for Ace and me as well especially at work.

However, I also wasn't sure if keeping it a secret was something that we could keep up forever. These leaks are bound to happen over and over again. Recalling the large crowd of reporters in front of my apartment sent a chill up my spine. Those people are not going to give up on us that easily. That's for sure.

"I want you to announce that everything was just a big misunderstanding and that the photos are misleading or even fabricated. You can make the announcement and so should the head of PR. We will treat it as your relationship isn't real and never existed in the first place. As I said, I completely refuse to acknowledge your relationship until the conditions of the deal are met," the chairman said conclusively.

"I'm only agreeing to this because I think that that would disturb Karina's and my work at the least," Ace said emotionlessly.

"That's the way that it should be," his father agreed solemnly.

"If that is it, then please excuse us," Ace said as he got up from the sofa and extended a hand my way.

I placed my hand into his without any hesitation. After all, there was no need for us to hide our relationship from the Chairman anymore. If he wanted to hold my hand, I would gladly hold his hand forever. Ace led me towards the door of the room for us to make our exit.

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"Ace..." his father called after us.

"What is it now?" Ace asked coldly without turning around.

"Good luck..." his father said before he turned to face the other way.

That was clearly a signal that he had nothing else to say to us and that we could now leave. I watched the Chairman's back as he stared out at the scenery of large garden below while I wondered what he was truly thinking.

“Let’s get out of this place...” Ace said as he hurriedly led me towards the exit of the large mansion.

“Ok...” I replied softly.

Although it was a visit to his home, the talk was all about business and there was nothing homey about Ace’s return home. From Ace’s impatient to get out of that place, I could tell that he wasn’t fond with being home. Perhaps it was about of his strained relationship with his father. That was my best guess because I didn’t dare ask him for more details.

“Let’s go back to my place. In case you haven’t figured it out already, I don’t really consider this place my home...” Ace said before grinning at me.

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I decided to name that day the ‘get to know Ace’ day. After spending the morning in bed together, he took me to his main house where we met his father. After that, as if we were on a property tour, he took me over to one of his places. According to him, he liked to use this place to hide away from the unwanted attention of the paparazzi.

When we arrived there, I had a good idea why he seemed to favor this place and why he had decided to take me there under these circumstances. The place was located a little out of the main city. I had expected that he would take me to some luxurious high-rise condominiums in the middle of the city, but it seemed like Ace had a different idea in mind.

“We’re here,” Ace announced a little proudly before he flashed me a smile.

“This place is different...” I mumbled.

It was really different but definitely not in a bad way. The place was a large house surrounded by thick woods. It seemed like the house was hiding in between the thick trees and the guards that I could see made the place feel very secure indeed. It wasn’t like someone was out for our lives so perhaps this was a little on the too much side.

“It’s peaceful here. Very good if you need to think,” Ace said casually before he offered me his hand.

“Which is exactly what we need...” I mumbled in agreement.

Ace was right. Although he might have thought things through already in anticipation of everything including his father’s requests and demands, the same couldn’t be said about me. I was confused, scared, indecisive, stressed, anxious, and everything else that I just couldn’t name. Basically, I was a mess, and I wasn’t sure what I wanted, what I hoped for, and what I should believe in.

I need some time to think...peacefully...

Ace led me by the hand into the house. Unlike his father’s house, this place had a homey vibe and also looked lived in. The place was clean and neat but there were hints to Ace’s life and how he lived here. Looking around made me feel instantly at home and it was a strange but welcoming feeling.

“Some coffee?” Ace offered.

“No, thanks...” I politely declined.

