

His kiss 33

Chapter 33

Gabriela had never set foot in an event like this before. Surrounded by curious stares, she felt an unfamiliar tightness in her chest.

Wesley offered his arm, a silent invitation. “You don’t need to be nervous,” he murmured, his voice steady and low.

She slid her hand into the crook of his arm, her fingers clinging a little tighter than necessary. In that moment, the distant, untouchable Wesley—so often a cold, intimidating presence—suddenly radiated a quiet strength she could lean on. Standing beside him, she felt an unexpected calm, as if his presence alone could shield her from anything the night might throw her way.

As they stepped into the venue, Gabriela was hit by the scale of the occasion. The air crackled with glamour and ambition. Tycoons she’d only glimpsed in glossy magazines mingled with A-list celebrities, famous faces from the silver screen gliding past in a blur of couture and diamonds. Everywhere she looked, she caught flashes of star power, dazzling and surreal, leaving her a little breathless as she tried to take it all in.

Wesley led Gabriela from one prominent figure in the business world to the next, pausing just long enough for polite introductions before moving on. She found herself face-to-face with the CEO of a household-appliance giant—his products notorious for being both outrageously pricey and somehow everywhere. He looked younger than she’d expected, though his thinning hair betrayed a few late nights and too many board meetings.

Next was the wife of a powerful man, radiant in a designer gown that shimmered beneath the chandeliers. The necklace at her throat—surely the same one tabloids claimed she’d dropped a fortune on—flashed like a lighthouse every time she laughed, drawing every eye in the room.

Gabriela could barely keep up, swept along as Wesley navigated the crowd with effortless authority. He barely lingered, offering quick, almost perfunctory introductions—his attention reserved, his conversation short. Only when they reached another businessman did Wesley’s posture straighten and his tone grow formal.

A steel-gray suit sharpened the man’s lean frame. He looked to be around sixty, not especially tall, silver hair swept neatly back from a face carved with deep lines, though something gentle softened his gaze.

Gabriela recognized him at once. All that time spent studying Alphacom Electronics paid off—this was Mason Garner, the CEO himself. A jolt of surprise ran through her. Just this morning, she and Aubrey had brainstormed ways to connect with anyone from Alphacom’s top executives. Yet now, here she was, with Wesley standing beside her, personally introducing her to Mason.

Mason’s eyes crinkled in genuine warmth as he greeted Wesley. There wasn’t a hint of the thinly veiled superiority older executives often showed the younger set—only sincere respect in his tone. After a brief exchange of pleasantries, Wesley smoothly turned his attention back to Gabriela.