

Under Mafia Protection - Chapter 1 Chapter 1 Reading Online for Free

Chapter 1

**Mena

**

"There should be no talking to the Fanuccis, no looking at the Fanuccis, and unless necessary—no breathing near the Fanuccis."

With my hands perfectly behind my back, I paid attention to the strict head maid of the huge mansion.

"You are here to work!" The woman named Madam Catherina spoke clearly. My eyes wandered to the other newly recruited maids. A small group of ten. None of them looked younger than twenty-four, meaning I had to be the youngest.

The mansion belonged to one of the most feared men in the city, Domenico Fanucci. Although he tried covering his tracks behind a family vineyard and brewery, everyone knew him as one of the most ruthless and notorious mafia bosses.

His sons had quite the reputation in the city as well, and it was not a good one. There was the youngest brother, Dante, known for his playboy ways, the middle child, Gian, known for his lack of manners, and at last, the oldest, the heir—Alessio, known for his hideous temper, cold aura, and handsome looks.

The youngest and only daughter, Melody, was a six-year-old firecracker, nicknamed the princess of the house, and apparently, she was difficult to handle.

She seemed the complete opposite from my daughter of the same age.

I didn't take Madam Catherina's words lightly. There was a reason why she had told us all of this, and truthfully—I didn't want to find out.

"Every single thing that reaches your ear and wasn't supposed to, will stay within this mansion," she continued. "Don't forget the non-disclosure agreement you have all agreed to sign. Follow the rules."

"And what if we don't?" One woman beside me dared to ask.

A chuckle escaped from Madam's lips, followed by a heavy sigh. "Well then, I suppose we'd be sending you back to where you came from... in a body bag." she muttered.

"E-Excuse me, Madam?"

"Nothing!" Madam clapped her hands. "Now, back to your posts, everyone! I expect everything to be impeccable. Remember, perfection is the standard here!"

~

With a damp rag in my hand, I scrubbed the marble floors. Looking at the clock, I could not believe it had only been one hour. The time seemed to move in slow motion.

My back ached as I worked myself to the bone, but I didn't stop. Madam Catherina had eyes everywhere, and losing this job was the last thing I needed at the moment.

My focus was interrupted when a maid from the opposite end of the hallway began sweeping the floor toward me. It was a new face, one I had not seen with the recruits from earlier.

The blonde maid showed me a soft smile, and I hesitantly gave her one in return. Interacting with new people had never been my strong suit. I wasn't shy, not at all. I was just a strong believer that fewer faces meant less drama.

"Hey there," the maid lowered herself to the floor, breaking the silence. "I'm Liza."

"Jimena," I introduced myself, wringing the rag in my hand. "But you can call me Mena."

"So, how's your first day going?" Liza asked, her eyes full of curiosity.

"Ah, it's... it's alright," I replied, focusing my gaze back on the polished floor. I bet Madam Catherina also had ears everywhere. "Have you been working here for a long time?"

"Just a year," she said, a small laugh escaping her lips. "Feels like forever sometimes, though."

I rolled my eyes before taking a huff. "I can imagine."

"So what brings you here, Jimena?"

This was the part I didn't like regarding meeting new people. She had asked me a question, and she expected me to answer.

"I... I just needed a change," I finally responded, twisting the truth. I feared sharing the real reason might make Liza run off, or worse, tell others, which would escalate in people pitying me. "I'm from a small town in Texas. There's not really much to do."

The truth was much harsher. I had run from my abusive ex, carrying my daughter, Natalie, with nothing more than the clothes on our backs. After a month of working at a diner for silly pay, I was desperate for stability. I wanted my daughter to have a better life than I did. I needed her to have that.

Both my parents were deadbeats, but she had a mother that cared. One willing to do anything for her.

"A change is good!" Liza responded. "I'm from the countryside myself. It's quiet, peaceful, but too peaceful, you know? I also needed something different."

But was it really that bad to live peacefully? Working for the Fanuccis had not exactly been at the top of my list. If it wasn't for him, I would kill to get back to the country side.

Our conversation was cut short by the sound of approaching footsteps, followed by a gasp leaving Liza's mouth. Suddenly, her hand clutched mine.

"Get up and clear the path," she whispered hurriedly. "Come on!"

Scrambling to my feet, I could see that all the other maids did the same and moved against a wall.

As I joined them, my eyes shifted down the hall, and there they were.

The infamous Fanucci brothers.

Dante, Gian, and Alessio.

In an instant, I looked at Alessio who stood in the center and buzzed with authority. His looks were dangerously charming. His dark hair, almost black, was slicked back, and his piercing brown eyes focused straight ahead. He was handsome, eye candy actually, and anyone denying it would've been stupid.

"Keep your head down, Mena," Liza breathed into my ear, her voice barely above a whisper. "You do not want to give them the impression that you're interested."

I gasped softly, instantly bowing my head so low that I was practically staring at my worn-out shoes. Grabbing the attention of one of the brothers was not something I desired.

Nervously, I held my breath until the footsteps passed.

Still, I couldn't help but take a peak and looked to the left. Unfortunately, Dante Fanucci had chosen that exact moment to glance back, and our eyes met.

His brows arched upon noticing my gaze, and then he shot me a flirtatious wink. A wicked grin was plastered on his olive skin, and his hazel eyes seemed determined. They were still kind. A sharp contrast to the cold vibe of his two elder brothers.

Dante turned his heel, twisting back around, and my heart pounded like a drum in my chest. Lowering my gaze was not an option as he marched towards me with a goal.

His two brothers followed suit, and then they stood in front of me.

"You're new here, aren't you?" Dante asked, his tone carrying a hint of mischief.

"Y-Yes, Sir." I stuttered. We were probably around the same age, but I wouldn't dare speak informally to the son of Dom Fanucci.

"And your name?"

"Jimena." I managed, feeling the heat rise to my cheeks.

Shamelessly, Dante scanned my body up and down before his eyes landed on my hands, still filthy from all the work I had done. I instinctively hid them behind my back, embarrassed by my appearance.

"You've been working hard today," Dante said. "You deserve a break. Come, have a drink in my room. We can get to know each other a bit better."

"N-No, thank you, Sir." I kindly rejected. "I should get back to work."

"I wasn't asking, Jimena." Although his tone had become a bit more demanding, his gaze was still polite and soft.

I bit my lip nervously, my stomach turning with anxiety as I had run out of words to say. I should've known, there was no saying no to a Fanucci. It just wasn't as easy as that.

Was this what Madam Catherina and Liza had been warning me about?

I opened my mouth, but before I could respond, Alessio stepped in, patting Dante's back.

His sharp eyes met mine as he spoke to his younger brother. "She doesn't want to, Dante. I'm afraid you've been rejected," Alessio told him, his tone expressing a hint of amusement.

I could not see it in his eyes, though. I doubted that man was capable of laughing.

A rush of relief washed over me at Alessio's gesture. He didn't do it for me. It was to prove a point to his younger brother, but it was still appreciated.

Dante shrugged, rotating his eyes as he made a nonchalant sound in the back of his throat.

Gian chuckled, shaking his head. "Rejected by a maid, I've seen it all now!" He commented, casually offending me as if it was an everyday thing to him.

"Yeah whatever, it's fine," Dante accepted with a careless wave of his hand. A challenging smile appeared on his lips. "Then I guess I'll see you around, Jimena."

With that being said, the three brothers walked away.

All it took was one second.

One second to make eye contact, and a few more seconds for them to find out my name.

What have I done?