

Under Mafia Protection - Chapter 3 Chapter 3 Reading Online for Free Chapter 3

Alessio

"I would like to make a toast and an announcement!" Domenico Fanucci got up from his chair, and for some reason I had hoped he wouldn't have.

We were at the monthly Fanucci lunch with the family, and after a few drinks too many, in combination with cigars, dad could barely stand up straight.

"Maybe you should sit down, Dom." Grandma tried saving him from embarrassment, but he wouldn't budge. Instead, he held on to his chair and raised his glass.

"This old man," My younger brother Dante shook his head, disapprovingly.

"He's so far gone, the only thing left for him to say are his final wishes for his funeral," My other brother, Gian spoke. "Ain't that right, Ales? I mean—look at him!"

I responded with a low hum, staring at my extended family who all anticipated his words.

Unfortunately this was nothing new in a family that worshipped him as if he was the lord himself, and rightfully so.

Grandpa Fanucci had come to the country without a single penny, and grandma had followed him with all of their twelve children.

Together with his eldest son, my dad, Domenic Fanucci, he had managed to build a vineyard from scratch, then a brewery, then a brand, then some more businesses, both legal and illegal, and had somehow grown into one of the largest mafia in the East Coast.

The Fanuccis ran this city, and everyone in it. Every neighborhood, every store, every tile on the street belonged to us—and it was because of my deceased grandfather, and Domenic Fanucci, that our entire family was blessed with this wealthy lifestyle.

The family had no choice but to follow him. Respect him. Listen to him.

"My eldest son, my heir, my legacy!" Dad began, looking straight at me. A small smile appeared on his lips. "You should all know that we will soon be starting the wedding preparations as he is to marry the beautiful woman sitting beside him."

My gaze shifted to Maxine Baldini, clutching tightly to my arm like she had won the jackpot. She was the symbol of the union between two powerful families, actually more of a tool than a person, but unlike me, she didn't seem to realize or care.

"Smile, babe," she muttered under her breath, her eyes glowing with excitement. "They're staring at us."

"Max," Gian who sat on my other side whispered, knowing how much she despised that nickname. "You should know by now, he doesn't do smiling—especially not with you."

Maxine clicked her tongue, glaring at my brother with hateful eyes, then she pressed a kiss on my cheek, earning several reactions.

Meanwhile dad began gushing about the alliance with the Baldinis.

Maxine Baldini wasn't just any woman, she was the only child of Leonardo Baldini, a man who was considered a rival by my father, and as many called him—King of the West Coast or the Leone.

This arranged marriage was nothing more than a strategic move to gain more power. By marrying me off to Maxine, Dad was ensuring a stronger hold on the territories. Whether it was in the West or the East, there would be limited competition and less potential threats.

It was good for Maxine, because if not for the agreement, no man would ever want to marry her, and it was bad for me because I didn't want to marry at all.

May it be Maxine or any other woman for that matter.

"This union," Dad chuckled, raising his glass higher. "It's what we've been waiting for. It's the dream that I shared with your grandfather, Alessio. And you, my son, are making it come true. Your grandfather would've been proud of you."

Grandpa this, grandpa that.

I could promise you, that man who was six feet under, didn't and wouldn't have cared for any of this.

He would've never agreed to an arranged marriage.

At least what Maxine lacked in brains, she made up with her other qualities. She had a decent face, great body, she was a good fuck, willing to do anything—but that wouldn't make her a good wife.

A good wife was someone kindhearted, someone who cared—like grandma, who had followed grandpa, knowing he had nothing.

A good wife was mom, who had raised us and cared for us. Despite the competition between her three sons, she made sure that Gian, Dante and I would never forget our brotherhood—and we hadn't.

A good wife was not someone like Maxine.

I had opposed to the wedding, hoping 'the great' Domenico Fanucci would be a fair man, but he wasn't.

All he said was that as long as I couldn't give him a good reason to end the engagement, one even mom and grandma would fight him over—I had to fulfill my duty.

It felt as if I was being trapped in a cage, giving away my freedom and the right to make my own choices. I enjoyed being a free man, and I liked having full control. I never wished to share my power, not even with my brothers.

The girl was nothing more than an extension of her father's business, a puppet in his grand scheme, which didn't sit well with me. I've spent my entire life dedicated to this business, and I was not going to share it with some family in the West.

I am Alessio Fanucci.

The heir, and the only heir.

Noticing all eyes on me, I raised my glass in response and clinked it with those around me.

Everyone drank to the future of the Fanucci family.

"Right, what he said!" I muttered.

With the toast done, people went back to their conversations. I let out a relieved breath as Maxine excused herself, leaving my side.

I couldn't stand her one bit.

I just couldn't.

I couldn't marry her.

My eyes shifted to the door as the maids walked in with more bottles of champagne. They moved around the table to refill the empty glasses.

"Bro," Dante leaned closer, addressing me and Gian. "The new one, Jimena, she's mine. So I need the two of you to back off." A smug grin plastered on his face as he watched her.

I glanced at the maid, from the corner of my eyes. She was at the other end of the long table, but even from here, I could sense her lack of presence. It was almost like she didn't belong there.

Other than her looks, there was not that much going on. Her skin had a subtle glow, her figure was petite yet curvaceous, but her expression seemed as if she was going to shit herself.

Innocent, pretty and boring.

I guess that was my brother's type.

I nudged him. "You don't even know if she's already taken."

Gian, who heard our conversation, let out a chuckle. "Since when has that ever stopped any of us?" He opened his arms, surprisingly making me laugh as well.

"If you want her, just go for it," Gian added, the grin never leaving his face. "It's not a big deal. She's just some maid."

"Exactly, brother." Dante pointed out. "That means she's good at cooking and cleaning. I can't make her my main, but she would make a good side-chick."

The laughter continued, yet this time, I remained silent. Unlike my brothers, I had more serious things to think about than fantasizing about one of our maids.

"You should choose your women more carefully," I gave him my unwanted opinion. "With that mindset, you'll end up with a gold digger."

"Meh, I'm just playing," Dante clarified himself. "And besides, if I'd tell dad I was interested in marrying a maid, he'd probably beg me not to marry at all," he added. "Especially it was a maid from our household, serving our family. He would see it as an embarrassment."

'He would probably beg me not to marry at all.'

For some reason, those words stuck with me, and a sudden idea formed in my mind. An opportunity to escape from the engagement.

I could use one of the maids as a scapegoat, and I would use the most unfit and weakest one.

Within time, dad would tell me he would rather not have me marry at all, and everything would go back to normal.

My gaze followed Jimena as she moved around the table. Her hands were shaking as she held the tray with the champagne bottle, and her lips were trembling.

I observed her closely as she first served my brothers, offering them nothing more than a polite, nervous smile.

"Thank you, beautiful." Dante smirked, forcing her to look into his eyes.

For a second it seemed as if she was about to respond, but then she closed her mouth and lowered her head.

Finally, she was standing by my side. She reached for my glass as I observed the visible veins in her neck, exposing her nerves.

A few strands of her hair stuck to her forehead, and it was not because of the hot weather.

She seemed frightened.

Quite hilarious considering I hadn't done anything yet to make her believe I was in fact a monster.

I tipped my glass slightly, just to see her reaction. The champagne splashed over the edge, creating a small puddle on the table.

"Aren't you going to clean that?" I teased a frozen Jimena. I watched with a grin as she immediately reached for a napkin, and so did I—our hands almost touching in the process.

"I-I'm sorry," she stammered, pulling back instantly. All throughout our interaction, her head was still lowered.

She embodied everything my father would disapprove of. Shy, fragile and incredibly plain.

"You can go now," I said, holding back a chuckle.

There was no need to tell her twice as she had already walked away.

She was perfect.

A perfect mess.

Since dad liked giving ultimatums, I would give him one this time.

I'll either marry the maid, or I'll marry no one.

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