

Under Mafia Protection - Chapter 6 Chapter 6 Reading Online for Free Chapter 6

Mena

"We have to hurry Nat, or you'll be late for school!" I panted, encouraging her as we ran. We were on a tight schedule and had to sprint straight off the bus.

A joyful giggle escaped Naty. We had overslept, and I was all but certain I'd be late for work too. Today was the day of the engagement party, and we had received strict instructions to show up early.

"Come on, Nat—this isn't going to cut it." I picked her up like a baby, walking towards the school gates. Naty who was still having fits of laughter, gripped her fingers into the denim jacket which perfectly hid my uniform.

"Mena, good morning!" A familiar mother from Naty's class spotted us. "I can take her inside. You look like you're in a hurry—go!" Her eyes were kind, but deep down I knew she pitied me, same as everyone else.

These women saw me as a confused young girl who didn't know how to raise her fatherless daughter. That's the picture they had already painted before even trying to get to know me.

At times I wondered if they would still pity me if they knew I worked at the Fanucci mansion.

"Thank you!" I spoke in between breaths, placing Naty on her two feet.

"Be good, listen to your teacher, have fun!" I said, pressing a quick kiss to her forehead. "I'll see you later, okay?"

"Okay!" Naty nodded energetically, showing me a toothy smile.

With that, I turned on my heel and ran back to the bus, literally—all while trying not to die due to poor condition.

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When I finally made it to the mansion, I was completely out of breath, so out of breath, you might even say my lungs were burning. I stood frozen at the gates for a moment, taking in the scene in front of me. Preparations for the party were already in full swing, and everyone was working.

Also inside the mansion, the halls were filled with workers, scrambling to finish everything in time.

"Mena!" Liza called out over the chaos, pushing several others aside to get to me. "There you are!"

"Am I late?"

"Don't worry, I covered for you with Madam Catherina. But you'll have to get started right away. Here," she shoved a list into my hands. "It's everything you'll need to get done before the party."

I scanned the endless list, feeling an uncomfortable knot form in my stomach. "I'm on it," I told her, realizing I didn't have time to waste.

~

As some time passed, and I was busy with my third chore, I slowly accepted today was going to be a long day.

I had been working for hours, my legs felt numb, my fingers felt numb, and the pantry I got assigned to was anything but small. At least I had a bit of privacy.

I thought, but it wasn't for long.

Startled, I stepped back as the young Melody Fanucci appeared in the doorway, humming a song. She headed straight to the wooden ladder, leaning against one of the shelves.

My eyes widened in concern as her small hands wrapped around rungs, trying to climb up. I was conflicted, unsure whether to interfere or not—but as a mother myself, I couldn't watch that child risk her life like that any longer.

"Uh, Melody," I said, stepping forward, "I'll get it. Just tell me what you want." I blocked her way to the top, carefully removing her hand.

The girl looked up with her big brown eyes, perhaps trying to figure out why I had the audacity to approach her. My gaze immediately fell upon her expensive dress, matched with a small designer handbag.

"I want a strawberry cookie," she eventually pointed to the jar on a high shelf.

"I'll get it for you."

I went up, grabbing the jar before handing her what she desired.

Without a simple thanks, Melody took a bite, letting the fresh crumbs fall onto the freshly swept floor. It made my skin itch, but I couldn't open my mouth. She was a Fanucci.

My hand twitched with the urge to immediately clean it up, but I forced myself to stay still. Maybe if I did something, she would feel offended—and I would lose my job.

"Are you just going to watch me?" Melody caught me off guard, speaking with her mouth full. "I'm not stealing, Mommy told me I can have a cookie!"

"Sorry," I mumbled, feeling embarrassed. I couldn't believe that I was apologizing and feeling somehow lesser in front of a six-year-old.

"My brother's getting married soon," she said.

I nodded, unsure what to say.

"His girlfriend doesn't look like us. She is mean, and she looks like a witch," she then added with a serious expression. I tried to hold back the cackle trying to escape my mouth.

"That's not very nice," I automatically felt the need to defend the woman, even if she was right.

Melody ignored my words and grabbed the dustpan and brush. Her beautiful dress reached the floor as she knelt to clean up her own crumbs. I watched her with a soft smile. Maybe she wasn't that bad.

"You didn't have to do that, Melody," I said.

"I know. But my brother said we should treat the workers kindly."

"Which brother?" I asked, not believing there could be a Fanucci brother with an actual heart.

"Him," she pointed behind me.

I gasped, turning around immediately. Dante Fanucci leaned against the door frame, causally with his arms folded. My eyes met his, and my heartbeat quickened.

It was not because I liked being around him. It was actually quite the opposite.

"Thank you for the cookie, pretty maid," Melody said, her voice snapping me out of my trance. She skipped away, leaving me alone with Dante.

As soon as she left, I tried to focus back on my work, sweeping the almost spotless floor. I had hoped Dante would get the message and make his way out, but instead, he cleared his throat, causing me to turn around.

"S-Sir?" I lowered my head, wondering what he was after.

"Please, Dante," he said, smiling proudly. "Don't overwork yourself."

Overwork?

Then how the hell was I supposed to make money?

"Well, it's kind of my job," I mumbled softly, returning to my duty.

"Well, get another one," he shot back, his tone nonchalant.

Dante seemed like the type of person who would be better off not talking at all. I bet it would make him look more intelligent. Did he really think I still would've been working for this family if had found something better?

Even though his thoughtless words bothered me, I chose to hold back my feelings.

"How old are you?" Dante asked, but I could not understand why that question would matter to him. "I... don't want to catch a case," he added. Fair enough.

"Twenty-four."

"I'm one year younger than you," he said, smirking. "But don't worry—I always had a thing for older women."

I nodded awkwardly, still eager for him to leave. In a desperate attempt to end the conversation, I grabbed my cleaning supplies. "I'm on toilet duty."

Before I could slip away, Dante stepped in front of me to stop me from leaving. "I'll help you carry your things," he offered.

"Oh, that won't be necessary—"

"I insist."

I gave him a forced nod. "Okay."

There was no use in arguing with a Fanucci, and it would only cost me more time and probably my job.

Dante took the bucket from my hands, and we walked toward the restrooms in complete silence. As we walked, I did my best attempts to not meet his gaze, but he wasn't even hiding his glances.

Once we had reached the restrooms, he put down the bucket and returned to his comfortable space against the door.

His presence was irritating, adding to my nerves. I had a job to do, and I couldn't do it with him keeping tabs on me.

"So," Dante said, breaking the silence.

"Yes, Sir?" I answered respectfully, pausing to look at him. Dante hummed, smirking without saying a word.

The way he stood there, watching me... was all too familiar, and he reminded me of someone I had been trying to forget.

"Thank you for your help, Sir," I said, hoping he would take it as a cue to leave.

"Right, I should let you work," he answered this time, nodding his head. "Then... I'll be on my way." Dante finally left the restroom.

It was clear as a day he was trying to make a move on me, seeing me as nothing more than an 'easy maid.'

I wasn't interested, not in the slightest.

Anson had taught me a painful lesson about men who wore their entitlement like a second skin. Men like that were used to getting what they wanted, and would never think to consider the feelings of others.

Fortunately, I had no intention of repeating my past mistakes.

There was no single brain cell of mine fighting for acknowledgment from a privileged, pampered, mobster like Dante Fanucci.

My life was perfect the way it was.

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