

Mafia God 194

Chapter 194: You Can't Be Serious

No.

No, no, no.

This wasn't happening.

"You can't be serious," Veronica said finally. "What has happened to you, Valentina? Is this my fault?" she continued, the words spilling now, faster, messier. "Is this because Dad is gone? Is this—Val, please, tell me what to do. You cannot seriously have changed that much."

"I cannot have a child, Vee. I'm too young," she continued. "I... what if I turn out like Dad?" Valentina swallowed hard. "He was overwhelmed. Everything just swallowed him whole. And I—I don't even know who I am yet, Vee. I haven't lived at all. I've had one boyfriend. One. For a few weeks." A hollow laugh slipped from her lips. "And then I get pregnant. I am irresponsible. That's what this is. How do I raise a kid when I can barely figure myself out?"

"Val..." Vee breathed. "It's my failure, not yours. I should have helped you better. Seen you better..."

"Don't do that, please." Valentina stepped forward then, closing the distance between them. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry." She threw herself into Veronica's arms, clinging to her. Her fingers gripped tightly. "You did good," she murmured into her shoulder. "You have always been there."

Veronica's arms wrapped around her instantly.

"I'm just a stupid girl," Valentina continued. "I'm just stupid."

Veronica's grip tightened. "No," she said softly, immediately, firmly, her hand coming up to cradle the back of her sister's head. "You're not. You're alright," Veronica continued. "You're alright. Just take a minute to think about this," she added, pulling back slightly, her hands still resting firmly on Valentina's arms. "Don't jump into any conclusions. I will be here," she said. "I will always be here for you. Whatever you decide," she finished softly, her thumb brushing gently against Valentina's arm, "I've got your back."

Valentina let out a small chuckle. "Luca said the same thing to me."

Veronica stilled, her hands still resting lightly on her sister's arms. "Luca knows?"

"No," Valentina said quickly, shaking her head. "But he suspected something was wrong."

Of course he did.

Veronica exhaled slowly, her lips pressing together as a familiar, complicated feeling curled in her chest. Luca's perception had always been unnerving. There was no such thing as coincidence with him. "How?" she asked

"Marco kind of beat Ricardo up."

"I love Marco," Vee said flatly. "I love him so much."

Of course Marco beat Ricardo up.

It made perfect sense. In a twisted, violent, comforting way.

But then—

"Wait..." she said slowly, her brows drawing together as realization crept in. "You told Marco before me?"

Valentina winced. "Sorry..."

And that— that did sting.

Veronica turned away for a moment, dragging a hand through her hair as she paced the small length of the kitchen again. It was becoming a pattern now—movement to contain emotion, pacing to prevent eruption. "My God..." she muttered under her breath. "What is happening to us?"

"Nothing... nothing..." Valentina said quickly, stepping closer. "I just needed to tell someone else first."

"And did he help you the way you needed him to?" Vee asked after a moment.

Valentina nodded. "Yeah... yeah. He is really sweet."

A smile spread across Vee's face. "You know..." she began, tilting her head slightly, "Marco and sweet... I don't know. I can't seem to put those two in the same sentence."

Valentina laughed too. "Same way I can't put Luca and sweet in the same sentence," she shot back. "It all depends on the side of them they show us," she continued. "Even when Luca is trying to be supportive, he comes off as gruff. Rough around the edges."

That was... accurate. Painfully so.

Veronica huffed a small laugh, shaking her head slightly. "Yeah," she admitted. "I guess so. I just learned to deal with it." She hadn't just learned to deal with it. She had adapted, adjusted, bent around him in ways she didn't fully understand yet. Because Luca wasn't easy. He wasn't gentle. He didn't offer comfort in the way most people did. But he stayed. He showed up. He paid attention. And somehow—that had become enough, more than enough.

"He really does love you, doesn't he?"

"In ways I will never understand," Veronica said quietly. "And I love him just as fiercely."

"Well," Valentina said after a moment, forcing a small smile, "now that we are getting our feelings out...Are you going to tell me who shot you?"

Veronica's body tensed. She drew in a breath. "I was shot by his wife," she said finally. "Luca's wife."

Veronica didn't need to look to know what that did to her sister.

"Luca has a wife?"

"Uh... yeah," Veronica said, the hesitation slipping through despite her effort to remain composed. "Arranged marriage. In Italy. It's complicated. But nothing like that will happen again," she added quickly, defensively. "Luca handled it."

"Oh... okay," she said slowly. "He divorced her?"

"No."

Valentina stared at her. "I don't understand what is going on here."

How could she? Because from the outside, it sounded insane.

A man with a wife.

"Val," Veronica said softly, stepping closer now. "Please... let's not overthink it."

But even as she said it— She knew.

This was exactly the kind of thing that needed to be overthought, pulled apart, examined, understood.

"I'm happy," she added. "That's what's important, right?"

"I guess so," Valentina said.

"Will you stay with me tonight?" she asked. "You can think about this pregnancy stuff."

Valentina nodded. She didn't want to be alone either.

They had each other.

Bianca walked ahead of Luca through the long corridor. There was a patience to her movements, a confidence that suggested she had already accounted for every possible reaction he might have.

Luca followed with the same ease, his small travel bag slung loosely in his hand.

The suite doors opened.

Bianca stepped inside first, her fingers brushing lightly against the edge of a table as she moved.

Luca stood at the doorway, his gaze sweeping across the room, remembering suddenly the last time he was here and what had happened. "I'm not staying here with you, Bianca."