

Mafia God 205

Chapter 205: I Have To Go

His eyes dragged over her again—he tried not to, he failed spectacularly. "Did Marco know about this?!"

Her lips twitched. "He kinda helped me put it together." A pause. Then, with mock offense, "Okay, wow. This is really looking like you aren't glad I am here."

Luca dropped the gun from his forehead, letting it hang uselessly at his side again as he stared at her. She looked entirely too comfortable being the center of his unraveling. "Vee..." He exhaled slowly. "I have to go."

"What?" she asked, quieter now.

"I mean—" He scrubbed a hand over his face. "I'm glad you are here. I truly am." He looked back at her, jaw tight. "But I just ruined an entire party. A party full of very powerful people in this city. For you. Because you said you were in danger."

"I am in danger," she replied stubbornly.

"Real danger!" he shot back, stepping closer again, frustration simmering just under the surface. "Not—this."

"Fine... fine," she muttered. She shifted slightly on the bed, the movement making the lace cling and slide in ways that were deeply unhelpful for Luca's already fragile composure. "Go to your party. Your wife...Just get me off these damned cuffs. I'll go back to New York in the morning."

"That's not what I meant," he said, more sharply than intended. "Goddamnit, Vee—" The gun hit the table with a dull thud. He didn't even remember deciding to drop it. He grabbed the key.

"You are really going to leave me," she said, not looking up.

"God damn it! This is not a joke, Vee!"

"Oh my God..." she let out a quiet, disbelieving breath. "You don't want me here." Her eyes dropped to the cuff still circling her wrist, and suddenly the entire setup—the lace, the teasing, the carefully constructed chaos—felt ridiculous. "Get me the key," she said, quicker now. "Get me the key."

Luca handed it over. And that... somehow hurt more. Veronica snatched it from his hand, the metal cold against her fingers as she fumbled—just slightly—before sliding it into the lock.

She pulled her hand away immediately, rubbing at her wrist. Then she reached for the robe. The soft fabric slid over her skin, swallowing the lace, hiding everything she had so deliberately revealed minutes ago. "I'm sorry," she said, tying the belt too tightly, fingers moving faster than her thoughts. "I'm terribly sorry." A hollow laugh slipped out. "I'll leave. Be the good little New York mistress."

Luca's hands disappeared into his pockets. "I want you here, Vee." She shook her head before he even finished.

"No... I shouldn't have sprung this on you. That was... selfish."

"Vee," he said slowly, stepping closer. "I know you so damned well. I do. You didn't do all this for fun. This is just like that stunt you pulled with Ineri. Acting reckless and suspicious."

Her shoulders tensed. He stepped closer. "Something is wrong." Veronica turned away from him, her back now facing him, giving herself a moment. Just a moment. Her fingers tightened around the edge of the robe.

Think. Say something. Anything. "Veronica..." he called. She swallowed.

"I was afraid, okay? I was afraid," she repeated. "And I didn't know how else to..." She exhaled, shaking her head faintly. "I didn't know how to say it without you dismissing it."

"Afraid of what?" he asked. She turned slowly.

"I'm constantly afraid," she admitted. "That maybe... maybe you'd fix things with her."

"Vee...If there was anything to fix, it would have been fixed long before you came along. You have to learn to trust me," he continued. "Because it doesn't look like I'll be getting out of this marriage."

Veronica swallowed, her lips parting slightly before she forced a small nod. "You can go," she said. "I'm sorry I pulled you away for nothing."

Before she could turn away again, he reached for her and pulled her into him. Her hands came up slowly, pressing against his chest. She buried her face against him, breathing him in.

"I'm glad you're closer," Luca murmured against her hair. "It's been actual hell without you. But," he added, pulling back just enough to look down at her, one brow lifting slightly, "I am going to punish you for this."

Veronica's lips pressed together, a faint sulk settling in as her eyes flicked away. "I knew that," she muttered. "I prepared myself for you and everything." Luca huffed out a quiet laugh, the tension in his shoulders easing just a fraction as his gaze drifted over her again.

"And it was quite something," he said, amusement threading through his tone. His hand lifted, fingers brushing under her chin, guiding her face up toward his. "It will always be you, Bambola."

Luca leaned in, pressing a slow kiss to her forehead. Then her nose, lighter this time. By the time his lips reached hers, the air between them had changed completely. His hand stayed at her jaw, thumb brushing lightly against her skin as he tilted his head just enough to deepen it, to feel her respond. He pulled back just slightly, his gaze dropping briefly beneath her robe before lifting to hers again. "I'm supposed to be at a honeymoon sort of resort right now, Vee," he murmured. "Don't make me stay."

"I'm not making you do anything," she said, but even she didn't believe it because her hands were already on him. Her fingers slipped to his suit jacket, unbuttoning it slowly, like she had all the time in the world and fully intended to use every second of it. Her eyes stayed on his face, watching him, measuring the effect. "You came here to rescue me, didn't you?" she murmured.

Luca's hands closed around her wrists, to interrupt the control she thought she had. The robe slipped from her shoulders under his touch, falling away. His eyes followed it down, taking her in.

Then he turned her. The movement was smooth, leaving her facing the wall. Her palms met it as he guided her hands upward, holding them there.