

Mafia God 224

Chapter 224: I'm Sure It's Nothing

Luca's expression shifted the moment Voss was out of earshot. He turned slowly to Marco. "Where did you find those?"

"I'm sure it's nothing, boss," he said.

"Where?"

"On her desk," Marco admitted. "Just lying there."

Luca followed the direction of his gesture, his eyes settling on the desk—Veronica's desk. He snatched the papers from Marco's hand. His eyes moved quickly over the documents, scanning, processing—

Cassidy had been in Italy at the same time as Veronica. The same days. The same city. Why?

Was he stalking her? What did he want from her? His mind moved even faster now, piecing together possibilities, none of them good.

And then the question that hit harder than the rest— Why did Veronica have them?

"Follow up on this," he said. "If that man has something planned for her, I want to know it."

Marco straightened immediately.

"Today!" Luca added. "Locate the hotel he stayed in. Find out who visited him. I want to know what he had to eat, who he saw, where he went."

Each instruction came faster than the last, his control tightening around the situation.

"Is that understood?"

"Yes, Luca."

"Son of a bitch!" Luca muttered under his breath, dragging a hand across his face as he turned away. "I'm closing for the day," he said abruptly.

Luciano got to Vee's house a few minutes later, the drive a blur he barely registered. His mind had been running the entire time—replaying the documents, the dates, the possibilities. He found her curled on the sofa, small against the cushions, a blanket loosely wrapped around her. "Hey... Vee..." he said, his voice lowering instinctively as he stepped closer.

She looked up at him. "Hey..." she replied, pushing herself up into a sitting position, brushing her hair back absently. "Why are you home now? You know..." she added, trailing off slightly.

"Difficult not to know," Luca said. He moved closer, his gaze scanning her quickly—noticing the tension in her shoulders, the way she held herself.

"I didn't want to bother you," she said quietly.

She should have. She always should have.

Luca exhaled slowly, stepping closer until he was standing just in front of her. "You don't bother me," he said. "You could never bother me," he added as he took a seat beside her. "What do you need?" he asked, turning slightly toward her, his gaze searching her face. "Tell me what you need."

She looked down at her hands, fingers loosely intertwined, her shoulders still tense despite his presence. "I just want to disappear," she said finally.

"See now," he said, leaning back just enough to look at her fully, "I can't let you do that."

"I know," Vee sighed, leaning back against the couch, her head tilting slightly as she stared at the ceiling for a moment.

The silence stretched briefly before she spoke again.

"What is happening?"

"It is going to be fine, Vee," he said. "It will blow over in a couple of days." He kept his tone even, reassuring.

"Tony said the same thing," she replied, turning her head slightly to glance at him.

"That's the way human beings operate," Luca continued. "They will move on to the next gossip in a few days."

Vee shifted then, turning fully to face him, drawing one leg up slightly onto the couch as she studied him more closely. "I have been meaning to ask you this for a bit," she said slowly, "but something always comes up." Vee glanced briefly around the living room, her eyes scanning the space.

Only when she was satisfied that no staff was lingering around did she lean in slightly, lowering her voice.

"Detective Voss seems to think you had something to do with...Paul Marino's death."

"Someone asked me for a favour," Luca said.

For a second, Vee didn't react. And then everything in her expression shifted at once. The blood drained from her face so quickly it looked like she had been struck cold. Her lips parted slightly, but no sound came out immediately, as if her mind needed a moment to catch up to what she had just heard.

"A favour..." she repeated, barely audible. "A favour?" Her voice rose slightly on the second repetition, fractured with disbelief. "Mr Marino was a sweet man!" she said suddenly, sitting forward. "A—What are you saying?" Her hands moved as she spoke, small gestures that betrayed the panic building underneath her control.

"Why are you looking at me that way?" he asked quietly. "You know what I do."

Her reaction didn't align with the world she already knew he lived in.

"Why do you suddenly look like you are staring at a monster?"

Vee shook her head quickly, as if trying to physically reject the thought forming in her mind. "Paul was..." she started, then stopped, swallowing hard. Her voice cracked slightly when she continued. "Why? What could you have gotten in return for doing that? What—" She couldn't even finish the question.

Because part of her didn't want the answer.

"Vee," he said, "my empire is strong because of all the favours I grant. All the debt people owe me. When I am approached for a favour," he continued, "I do not ask if the mission is Mother Theresa herself. The only thing that is my business is what I get from the transaction." His eyes stayed on her the entire time.

"How can you say that?" she whispered. "And now everyone thinks I had something to do with it," she added.

"People think what they want to think," Luca said.

"You do not feel even the tiniest of guilt," she said quietly.

"No... no I do not. Do you want me to go to Detective Voss and confess so it can get the heat off you?" he asked. "Is that what you want?"

"That's not what I am saying," she said. "That's not what I mean."

"Then tell me what you want," he said. "Tell me why you are looking at me like that. Tell me why I suddenly disgust you."