

Mafia God 235

Chapter 235: I Have To See Cassidy

"I have to see Cassidy," she said finally, the decision forming as she spoke it, her posture straightening, resolve settling in her expression.

"The hell you will!" Luca fired back instantly.

"Excuse me?" she said.

"You heard me," Luca said, stepping closer, his eyes locked onto hers. "You are not going anywhere near him."

"And why exactly not?" she challenged.

"Because I said so," he shot back.

"What is that supposed to mean?" Vee snapped back, her patience finally snapping under the weight of everything he wasn't saying.

"I'm not letting you anywhere near him."

"You're not letting me?" she repeated. "You're not letting me?! Who the hell do you think you are?!" she demanded, her eyes blazing.

"There you go again!" Luca shot back, his own temper flaring instantly. "Setting off for no reason."

"No reason?" she echoed. "You're trying to control where I go and who I talk to!"

"I cannot let you walk into enemy territory!" he fired back.

Vee threw her hands up. "It's Cassidy!"

"And what the hell is that supposed to mean?!" Luca snapped.

"It means," she shot back, refusing to back down even an inch, "he is a school teacher—not this version you keep trying to make him out to be!"

"Correction," he said. "He was a school teacher. He is a Bastione," Luca continued. "A long-standing rival of the Genovese. A thorn in our flesh. And in case you forgot," Luca added, "you are part of the famiglia."

"I am not going there to kiss and get back with him," she said. "I am going there to find out what the hell is happening. You think I'm stupid?" she continued, her gaze locking onto his. "You think I don't understand what this could mean? That someone is trying to create a story? But sitting here and doing nothing?" she added, shaking her head slightly. "That's not me."

"It's not about doing nothing," Luca said. "It's about using your head. It's about doing the right thing."

"And you deciding what that is for me?" she challenged.

"No," he said immediately. "Me stopping you from walking into something you don't fully understand."

"And you do?" she shot back again. "I have to do this," she said.

Luca exhaled slowly, running a hand over his face, frustration and concern warring inside him. "You're not hearing me," he muttered.

"No," she replied quietly. "You're not hearing me."

"And you think he will just tell you what's going on, right?" Luca spat. "You'll just bat your lashes at him and he'll spill his guts?"

Vee's eyes flashed instantly. "I have to at least try," she shot back. "And you cannot stop me."

"Vee, you need to listen to me!" Luca snapped, stepping toward her, then forcing himself to slow down, dragging a breath through his lungs like he was trying to rein himself in. "Don't make this any worse than it already is. I told you—I am looking into it."

"And I plan on going right to the source," she replied, her chin lifting slightly, her resolve hardening with every second.

"Veronica!"

"Luca..." she said. "This?" She gestured vaguely between them, at the tension, the argument, the control. "You will not win. I am doing this."

And with that, she turned. Her footsteps were sharp against the staircase as she moved quickly, her anger carrying her upward, away from him, away from the argument that had reached a point of no return.

"Vee—" Luca started, but the sound of her bedroom door slamming cut him off completely. He stood there in the middle of the living room, his hands flexing at his sides like he didn't know what to do with the energy still coursing through him. His mind was racing. He knew her.

She was going. And that was a problem. He couldn't let her. Not now. Not with everything already in motion.

Marco barely registered the soft thud of the plane's landing gear touching down. The moment the aircraft slowed, his phone was already in his hand, the screen lighting up in the dim cabin.

One message.

She said yes.

Marco stared at it, his thumb hovering just above the screen. He exhaled slowly, his lips pressing into a thin line as he rose with the rest of the passengers, moving through the aisle on autopilot. The airport in Italy buzzed around him when he stepped out—voices overlapping in rapid Italian, rolling suitcases clattering across polished floors.

None of it registered.

"She said yes."

Of course she did. By the time he stepped into the waiting airport cab, the driver barely had time to greet him before Marco gave a quiet, clipped instruction. "Genovese estate."

The driver nodded and pulled away from the curb, merging into traffic. Marco leaned back into the seat, his gaze drifting back to his phone.

He knew she would say yes. Valentina had always looked at Ricardo like he was something she couldn't quite walk away from—even when she tried. It wasn't surprising. It was inevitable.

She was smitten with him. He should be happy. That was the part that made the most sense. She was happy.

He should be happy because she was. But he wasn't. He couldn't even force it. He shifted slightly in his seat, pulling in a slow breath as he looked out the window, watching the Italian countryside blur past—sunlight stretching over rolling hills, stone walls lining the roads, everything calm and picturesque.

He reached for his phone again. His thumb hovered over her name. For a second, he considered calling her.

Congratulating her. Hearing her voice, telling him everything he already knew. He couldn't do it.

His hand stilled. Then slowly, he lowered the phone. He couldn't bring himself to say the words.

Couldn't bring himself to pretend. He couldn't bring himself to hold onto something that had no place existing anymore.

And now... he couldn't even bring himself to love her anymore. Not because the feeling was gone—but because he knew it had to be.