

Mafia God 236

Chapter 236: She Isn't Your Responsibility Anymore

Marco let out a quiet breath, his thumb moving again to his gallery. To a folder with her name on it. He opened it.

Photos filled the screen—small moments, stolen ones. Valentina laughing, caught mid-motion. Looking away from the camera. Looking straight into it. Unaware. Aware. Soft. Bright.

"What did you think was going to happen?" he muttered quietly.

That she would just exist there—untouched, waiting? That he could love her silently, indefinitely?

Marco didn't usually let himself linger on those photos. That was the rule he had set early on. Keep them there if you must. A private archive. A weak indulgence. But never open it too long. Never stare too hard. Never let it become what it wanted to become.

The countryside outside looked almost unchanged from the last time he had been here—endless stretches of green and gold, old stone structures half-swallowed by time, sunlight spilling across everything.

Then, he began deleting them. One by one. Each image disappeared with a soft confirmation tone.

He didn't stop until the folder was empty. When the final photo vanished, Marco stared at the blank space where it had been, his thumb still resting on the screen.

"She isn't your responsibility anymore," he said under his breath. He leaned his head back against the seat, eyes fixed on nothing in particular as the car turned off the main road and approached the Genovese estate.

The car slowed. The Genovese estate came into view. The car came to a stop, and he stepped out immediately, adjusting his jacket as the driver drove off behind him.

The gates opened as soon as he was recognised. Marco walked forward. It had been a while.

The last time he stood here had been at Luca's wedding. He had a theory to confirm. He had barely taken two steps past the threshold when he saw Bianca.

She stood near the base of the staircase, poised as always, dressed in something simple but impeccably tailored.

"Marco?" she said, her brows lifting slightly in surprise as she turned fully toward him. "What are you doing here?"

Marco inclined his head politely. "Mrs. Genovese. Good morning," he greeted. "Luca sent me with a message."

"Oh?" she said lightly. "Isn't that why Julian is in New York?"

"He thought it wise that I carry the message instead," he replied smoothly, not giving her anything more than what was necessary.

"Well," she said, turning slightly toward the staircase, "Luca knows best."

She gestured for him to follow, already moving up the stairs. Marco followed a step behind, his gaze subtly taking in everything without appearing to do so. "I'll show you to the guest room where you can rest."

"Is Don out for the day already?" Marco asked.

"Yes," she replied. "He had an early morning."

Marco nodded once, filing that away. "I will go to the wharf then to see him," he said. "I have to leave as soon as possible."

"Of course," she responded easily. "I'll have them bring you breakfast to your room. I hope the flight wasn't too tedious."

"It's alright," Marco said. "Thank you for your hospitality, Mrs. Genovese."

They reached the guest wing. Bianca stopped in front of a door and turned to face him again.

Marco stepped forward, placing himself just slightly in front of the door, his hand resting lightly against it.

He didn't open it immediately. Instead he offered her a small, respectful nod that doubled as dismissal.

"You don't like me much, do you?" she said. "Or," she continued, tilting her head ever so slightly, "is it because your boss's mistress has you wrapped around her finger also?"

"My feelings do not matter," Marco said. "And point of correction, ma'am...I have never been known to like anyone. It's nothing personal."

Bianca's lips curved faintly at that. "Of course," she murmured softly. "How is my husband?" she asked.

The transition was seamless.

"He is doing well," Marco replied. "Business as usual."

Bianca nodded slowly. "Good," she said quietly. Then she straightened slightly, reclaiming that composed, hostess-like demeanor. "Alright," she added, turning slightly toward the staircase. "I will leave you be. The maids will be by shortly."

Marco inclined his head once.

"And I will assign a driver to you," she continued.

"That will not be necessary, ma'am," Marco said. "I will find my way around."

"Don will not be happy with me," she said carefully, "if I let you gallivant around town without proper chauffeuring."

"I can drive myself, Mrs. Genovese. Thank you anyway," Marco said, keeping his tone polite, respectful—everything it needed to be.

He knew exactly what he was refusing. A driver was surveillance. A quiet set of eyes that reported back without ever seeming intrusive. Every stop, every detour, every conversation—nothing would go unnoticed.

And Marco had no intention of moving under anyone's watch.

"As you wish," she said finally.

It sounded gracious. But it wasn't acceptance. She turned and walked away but her mind was already racing.

Marco was here for a reason. Not just to deliver a message. By the time she reached her bedroom, she had already decided.

She closed the door behind her, and crossed the room in steady strides. She reached for her phone and dialled Julian.

The wharf carried its own rhythm—rougher, louder, steeped in business. Inside one of the offices overlooking the docks, Don Genovese sat across from his guest, Don Vitale.

A knock came at the door.

"Enter," Don Genovese said.

One of his men stepped inside, nodding respectfully before speaking. "Sir, Marco has arrived. He's asking to see you." Don Genovese nodded in response.

"Marco?" Don Vitale repeated, his brows lifting slightly as he leaned back in his chair. "Isn't that Luca's capo?"

Don Genovese nodded once. "Yes, he is. Luca must have sent him."

Vitale leaned forward slightly, his fingers steepling together as he studied Genovese's reaction. "Interesting," he murmured.

Then, as if the thought had only just occurred to him—but clearly hadn't—he shifted the conversation.

"Do you not think Bianca living so far away from her husband is... healthy for their marriage?" he asked casually.