

Mafia God 250

Chapter 250: I Wasn't In Town

Marco lived well. Very well. Not quite on Luciano's scale—but close enough to make a statement.

Valentina wrapped her arms lightly around herself as she was led inside by one of the house staff.

The house interior was just as impressive—modern, clean lines blended with warm lighting and rich textures.

She was led into the guest reception area, a quiet, elegant space with low couches, a glass coffee table, and a large window that overlooked part of the garden.

"Please, have a seat," the maid said politely before stepping away.

Valentina nodded, offering a small smile, and sat down. The sound of footsteps broke through her thoughts. She got to her feet.

Marco stepped into the room. He had changed out of his travel clothes, now dressed simply. "Val..." He cleared his throat slightly, straightening where he stood. "What are you doing here?" He took her in properly.

She looked... softer. Rounder at the edges. There was a quiet glow to her now, a maturity that hadn't been there before. The pregnancy hadn't changed her completely, but it had added something new to her presence.

Valentina noticed the way his eyes lingered, the way he seemed to hesitate before speaking again.

Something was off.

"Have I done something wrong, Marco?" she asked gently.

"Uh... no," he said quickly.

Valentina's brows drew together slightly. "Then tell me why you've been avoiding me," she pressed, taking a step closer. "Avoiding my calls."

Marco took one step back, like he was trying to pace, his hands sliding into his pockets. "I wasn't in town," he said. "I just got back."

"So you couldn't pick up your phone?" she asked. "You couldn't call me back when you could?"

"I'm sorry," he said finally.

Valentina shook her head slightly. "Something is wrong, Marco," she said. "And I'm not an idiot." Her eyes locked onto his. "I know it has something to do with me getting engaged to Ricardo."

He let out a slow breath, his gaze dropping to the floor before lifting back to her. "You're wrong," he said.

"Am I?" she asked quietly. "You've never ignored me before," she added.

Marco swallowed, his throat suddenly dry. "You're overthinking it," he tried again, but even he could hear how weak it sounded.

"No," she said. "You are disappointed in me. You think I shouldn't have gotten back with him."

His gaze flickered to the ring on her finger. "You're getting married, Val," he said finally.

"Yes," she replied softly.

"And you're pregnant," he added.

"Yes."

"What exactly do you want from me? Someone else is responsible for you now." he asked.

"I—" she started, then stopped. "I want my friend back," she said finally.

"Some things cannot stay the same, Val," he said quietly.

"Why?" she asked.

"Because if I were Ricardo, I wouldn't like it," Marco said. "I'm sure Ricardo will not appreciate you being close with me."

Valentina stared at him, disbelief flickering across her face. "Before there was Ricardo," she said softly, stepping closer, "there was you. Ricardo understands what we have."

"What do we have?" he asked. "I am not your friend. I am not your brother. I am not your family. I am just a man who helped you out."

Valentina physically recoiled, her breath catching. For a moment, she just stared at him, hurt flashing openly across her face.

But she didn't retreat. She had not come all the way here for that.

"You're trying to hurt me," she whispered, her voice trembling despite her effort to steady it.

"I'm telling you the truth," Marco replied.

Valentina shook her head slowly, her eyes glistening now. "No," she said. "Next to Vee," she continued, her voice gaining strength despite the emotion swelling in her chest, "you are the most important person in my life. You are the—"

"Don't say it," Marco cut in quickly. "Don't say it, Val."

"If you instruct me," she said, "right here, right now to break things off with Ricardo—I will. I absolutely will," she added, taking another step toward him. "I cannot stand you being mad at me."

"I'm not mad at you, Val!" Marco said.

"Then tell me why you are punishing me!" she snapped. "Tell me why one of the first people I wanted to tell about my engagement is running away from me. Tell me why the one I consider a brother—"

He had warned her. He had told her not to say it. But she did. And something in him—something tightly locked away—finally snapped.

Before she could finish, Marco closed the distance between them. His hand came around her waist, pulling her into him before she could react.

He kissed her. It was everything he had buried, everything he had denied himself, everything he had swallowed down every single time she smiled at him, trusted him, leaned on him.

It was release. It felt like absolute bliss. Like silence after chaos. Valentina froze against him, her breath caught in shock.

He pulled back just slightly, his breath uneven. "I'm not your brother..." he whispered against her lips.

And right there, the line was gone. Completely obliterated. In that moment, Marco knew it with a clarity, he had crossed it.

The one line he had sworn, over and over again, that he would never cross. The line that protected her.

Valentina staggered back slightly. Her fingers lifted slowly to her lips, brushing over them like she was trying to confirm what had just happened. Her eyes—wide, stunned—locked onto his.

He saw, right there in her eyes, the moment confusion gave way to realization. To understanding. "I'm not your brother," he repeated.

Valentina's lips parted, her chest rising and falling as she struggled to process everything all at once. "Marco..." she breathed. "What have you done?"

When Julian and Bianca finally found a sliver of time to meet in the war room, the tension between them was already thick enough to choke on. The room itself seemed to absorb the fury that Bianca carried in with her.

"How can you be so stupid?!" she screamed.