

## Mafia God 264

### Chapter 264: I'm Sorry I Hurt You

"I'm sorry," Valentina said simply. "I'm sorry I hurt you."

He stepped fully into the room and gently closed the door behind him. "I don't know what to say, Val," he admitted. "I don't." He took a few steps further into the room, stopping just short of where she stood. "I am relieved that you are here," he added honestly, his gaze softening just slightly. "Truly."

When she had walked away, when she had placed that ring back into his hand, he thought he had lost her completely.

"But what is it you want?" he asked.

Valentina swallowed, her fingers tightening together briefly before she steadied herself. "Maybe... we can pick up where we left off," she said.

It sounded hopeful. She was testing whether that future still existed. Ricardo let out a quiet breath, his gaze dropping for a moment before lifting back to her.

"And Marco?" he asked. "How many more times will you choose him over me?"

"Ricardo, there is no comparison between you both," she said quickly, stepping forward just a fraction. "It's you I love. It's you I want." She meant it.

Every word.

"But you're a package deal?" he said, his voice tightening now despite his effort to stay calm. "You come with Marco?" His eyes searched hers, trying to understand something that didn't fit neatly into logic. "I'm going to be married to two people?"

"No," Valentina said immediately. "No, I talked with Marco."

"Val..." he started, then stopped himself. "We shouldn't do this if your heart is not going to be in it."

Whatever this was going to be—He needed it to be real, whole, undivided.

"No!" Valentina said quickly, her voice rising with urgency. "I promise. I want to marry you." Her eyes held his, desperate for him to believe her. "But I also..." she hesitated, the truth catching in her throat before she forced it out. "You need to understand—Marco saved my life. He is my friend."

The word felt insufficient. Too small for what they actually were.

"Clearly," he said after a beat, "he wants you in another capacity."

"It's always been platonic between us," Valentina assured him. She said it with conviction. If she held onto that version of the truth tightly enough, it would smooth over everything else. For her, it had been. The lines had only blurred recently. She was still trying to redraw them.

He stepped forward and pulled her into his arms. "You scared me," he murmured against her hair. "You scared me so badly, Val."

Valentina closed her eyes briefly as she melted into the embrace, her arms wrapping around him in return. "I'm sorry," she whispered. "Let's not wait anymore, please," she said. "Let's get married soon." She had seen how easily things could fall apart, and she didn't want to leave space for that again.

A slow smile spread across his face—genuine, relieved, hopeful.

"Pick a date," he said, a lightness returning to his voice for the first time in what felt like forever, "and I will have my mother here in the blink of an eye."

Valentina let out a soft laugh. "I have to talk to Nonnina and Vee," she replied, already thinking ahead. "See how soon they can pull it off."

Ricardo nodded, still smiling. His eyes held gratitude. "Fine," he said. "I'll wait a little bit more."

Then he leaned in and kissed her. When he pulled back, the relief that washed through him was physical. Something heavy had finally been lifted from his chest.

He reached into his pocket, his fingers brushing against the familiar shape he had kept there ever since she gave it back.

The ring. He pulled it out slowly, his gaze lifting to meet hers again.

"Let's make sure it stays on this time." he said softly.

Then he took her hand and slipped it back onto her finger.

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When Luca arrived home later that night, he hadn't expected to see her. So when he walked into the living room and saw her there—

He stopped. Veronica sat on the floor, surrounded by what looked like an entire wedding planning empire. Catalogues were spread out in every direction—fabric samples, venue options, floral designs, invitations—pages flipped open, marked, stacked, discarded.

She was focused and completely absorbed. The world outside those pages didn't exist. He loosened instantly.

His heart did a small, involuntary flip. A ridiculous, completely out-of-place burst of happiness that he didn't even try to hide from himself.

She was here. In his house. Nonnina sat comfortably, flipping through one of the catalogues with a level of concentration that suggested she had already taken full control of the situation.

She hadn't even noticed him walk in. Which, in itself, was a miracle. For the first time all day—

Something felt... right.

"Hey!" Luca said finally, his voice cutting gently through the quiet hum of paper and soft conversation.

Nonnina looked up immediately, her face lighting up the moment she saw him. "Diavolino! Oh so sorry!" she exclaimed, already getting to her feet. "Wedding plans, always tedious."

There was no real apology in her tone. She was excited to be fully immersed in something joyful.

She walked over to him, her hands already reaching for his jacket. It was second nature. Luca leaned down slightly, pressing a soft kiss to her hair—a small grounding ritual he didn't even think about anymore.

"It's fine, Nonni," he murmured.

She slid his jacket off his shoulders, smoothing it once before draping it over her arm.

Luca's eyes drifted past her to Veronica. "Vee?" he called.

She didn't look up. If anything, she flipped a page a little too deliberately, her attention glued to the catalogue in front of her. It seemed to hold the answers to life itself. "Hi," she answered after a beat.

There was no mistaking it—she was ignoring him on purpose. And honestly? He deserved it.

"I'll run your bath," Nonnina offered, already turning to head upstairs.

"No," Luca said quickly, shaking his head. "I'll just take a shower. You can continue with this."