

Mafia God 273

Chapter 273: He's Just A Softie

Ricardo looked at her, brows lifting in mild disbelief. "Do you know Luca?" Ricardo raised a brow. "Have you met Luca?"

Val didn't even flinch under the challenge. Instead, she tilted her head slightly, as if the question itself was unnecessary. "He's just a softie."

"To your sister!"

The protest came out instantly. That single clarification was the most important correction he could possibly make in the conversation.

Val didn't seem particularly moved by his reaction. She looked seriously amused now, watching him take all of this far too seriously. "Oh don't make him sound like the devil." Val said.

"He is the devil!" Ricardo exploded.

The words came out louder than he intended.

"Thanks for certifying me." Luca said from behind them.

Ricardo jumped out of his skin and turned around so fast he nearly knocked into the counter. His heart thudded hard against his chest as he faced the man he had just been loudly condemning. Luca stood there like he had always been there—composed, unbothered.

"Luciano! Didn't know you were close by." Ricardo's tone shifted instantly, scrambling for recovery. He forced a smile.

Luca's gaze flicked briefly between them. There was something unreadable in his expression—something that made it impossible to tell whether he found the situation amusing or simply irrelevant. "I was." he said simply.

Then his attention shifted fully, landing on Valentina.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"I was just about to have breakfast. Where is Vee?"

"Cake hunting for the wedding."

"So where are we going?" Val asked.

"I'm taking you wedding shopping."

There was a pause—a beat where the words settled, processed, and then—

"oooooooooh..." Val's reaction burst out of her. Her face lit up, excitement replacing everything else in an instant. She moved quickly, grabbing a take-away plate and scooping her breakfast onto it hurriedly. She suddenly couldn't afford to waste a single second.

Ricardo watched her with resignation, the earlier tension in his body slowly dissolving into acceptance.

Val barely looked at him as she packed up her food, her attention already fully on Luca and what he had just offered. "When you say take me wedding shopping, is there like a price limit?"

"No?" Luca said.

Her eyes widened instantly, lighting up with a kind of excitement that could only mean trouble for Luca. "Oh...oh...oh...You are in for a fabulous day, my dearest sister's crazy boyfriend." She practically sang the words, her voice bubbling over with delight as she bounced slightly on the balls of her feet. In her mind, plans were already forming—outfits, stores, possibilities stacking endlessly now that one crucial limit had just been removed.

Luca watched her, the corner of his lips threatening to lift. But Ricardo was still there. So whatever amusement Luca felt stayed controlled, tucked neatly behind his usual composure.

"Ric....could you get my bag? My phone... My vitamins should be in there too!" Val instructed excitedly.

"I got it...I got it..." Ricardo responded quickly, eager to be useful in any way that did not involve direct interaction with Luca. He disappeared into the bedroom without another word, grateful for the brief escape.

Val was still moving about, finishing her toast, while Luca remained where he was, still, observant.

Ricardo returned a moment later, Val's bag slung over his shoulder. He stepped forward and held the bag out toward Val.

But instead of taking it, she waved him off absentmindedly, her mouth full as she tried to finish the last bite of toast.

She gestured instead—toward Luca. A simple motion. A devastating instruction. Ricardo froze.

His eyes flicked from Val... to Luca... then back to Val again, as if hoping he had misunderstood. Surely she didn't mean—

But she did. And she wasn't even looking at him anymore. Ricardo looked at Luca, the bag in his hand.

Oh...no way. He'd rather die. Every instinct in him resisted the idea of stepping closer, of placing anything—anything at all—into Luca's hands. Well unless it was a weapon. Nothing else quite seemed to fit in his hands.

He turned back to Val, silently pleading that she look at him, reconsider, change her mind, give him literally any other task.

But she didn't. She just kept chewing. Oblivious. Luca stepped forward then. He stretched his hand out calmly.

Ricardo swallowed. He lifted the bag slightly and placed the handle into Luca's outstretched hand.

Luca was determined to do anything to get Veronica to forgive him, and he was starting with her soft spot: her sister, Valentina. It wasn't a strategy he particularly enjoyed, but it was a necessary one. He understood people—understood leverage, pressure points, emotional ties—and Valentina was undeniably one of Vee's strongest.

If Valentina was happy, Vee was happy. His life would be ten percent easier. Maybe more. Maybe enough to tilt things back in his favor, even just slightly.

"Alright, let's go." Valentina said with a mouth full of toast and a packed breakfast in her hand. "Bye!" she added quickly, waving over her shoulder to Ricardo without waiting for a response. She was already halfway out the door before the word even finished leaving her mouth, her energy impossible to contain. The excitement radiated off her in waves—bright, infectious, and completely at odds with the quiet calculation running through Luca's mind.

Luca followed at a more measured pace, her bag still in his hand. It looked out of place against him. If carrying it earned him even a fraction of goodwill, then it was worth the absurdity.

Their footsteps echoed faintly as they walked toward the elevator—Valentina's quick and light, Luca's steady and unhurried.

She pressed the button impatiently, shifting her weight from one foot to the other. The moment the elevator doors slid open, she stepped in. Luca followed, the doors closing behind them.

Then Valentina turned.

"What did you do?"

"What makes you think I did anything?"

"Because you are kissing my ass right now?"

The elevator hummed softly as it descended.

Luca exhaled through his nose, a restrained smile threatening to surface before he pushed it back down.