

Mafia God 274

Chapter 274: I'm A Rare Breed

"Tell me, Miss Scalese. Why exactly are two men losing their minds over you?" Luca asked sarcastically.

"I'm a rare breed." She shot back and paused a moment. "How is he?"

"I cannot talk to you about him."

"You want my help?"

"No. I am merely taking you shopping. You know, for your wedding." Luca said.

The deflection was almost elegant. Almost. But not quite enough.

"You want my help getting my sister to forgive you? I will be spending your money and the only thing we will be talking about today is Marco."

The elevator continued its descent, the numbers ticking down slowly above them, each passing floor stretching the moment thinner.

"Miss Scalese..."

There was a warning in the way he said her name. A reminder of who he was, what he was used to, how conversations like this usually ended—with him in control.

But Val didn't flinch.

"Deal or no deal?"

She knew what she was offering. More importantly, she knew what he stood to lose if he said no.

For a moment, Luca said nothing. He weighed the cost, the inconvenience, the irritation of being maneuvered like this... against the one thing that mattered more.

Vee. His jaw tightened just slightly.

"Oy vey..." five minutes in and he was already exasperated. "Fine." He answered grudgingly.

Val's smile widened instantly, bright and victorious.

"Nice, Mr Luca the devil. We will be starting with dress shopping." She chimed just as the elevators opened.

"I have one question." Luca started.

"Yeah..." she answered as they headed out of the building to the curb where Luca's car was parked.

Out of habit, Luca scanned the area quickly before opening the car door for her. It was instinctive—the brief sweep of his gaze, the way his posture shifted just slightly as he assessed his surroundings. He really didn't know how to switch it off.

Valentina slipped into the passenger seat. She settled in comfortably, placing her bag on her lap.

Luca closed her door and moved around the car. He slid into the driver's seat.

"Yeah?" she asked again once he entered.

Luca started the engine. "How in the world did you get pregnant so quickly?!"

"uh...there is no answer to that."

She shrugged lightly. Luca glanced at her briefly before pulling the car away from the curb, his brows drawing together slightly.

"I mean...its like one minute your father is handing me your virginity on a silver platter and boom, you are pregnant."

Valentina laughed. "Like I said, I am a rare breed. So...how did you know Marco?"

"He is my brother."

"I don't mean the famiglia." Valentina shot him a look. She expected him to stop pretending he was dumber than he actually was.

She was curious, and Luca could tell. Which made him wonder if she was actually marrying the right person.

He kept his eyes on the road, one hand steady on the wheel, the other resting loose near the gear shift. The car glided forward smoothly. "He is my actual brother." Luca answered.

"How?"

"We have the same mother."

That was all he said. The explanation was simple enough to satisfy anyone with sense. Valentina stared at him for a beat, then let out a small breath of surprise.

"I did not know that." Her brows lifted slightly. She was putting pieces together, rearranging the shape of a man she thought she knew.

"It's not something we tell over energetic pregnant women on wedding shopping."

The corner of Valentina's mouth twitched.

"You are a terrible person to have a conversation with."

He didn't even try to deny it. "I've been told."

She leaned back against the seat with a soft huff, the beginnings of a smile threatening to break through despite her attempt to stay annoyed. "I think I am getting the short end of the deal here."

Luca gave her a sidelong glance. "Doesn't matter. We have a deal. Now, how do I get your sister to stop being mad at me?"

That brought the conversation back around to the real reason he was doing all of this in the first place. The woman he wanted to reach, and the wall he hadn't found a way through.

Valentina's eyes shifted toward him slowly, a new sort of interest settling in her expression. She smiled to herself, seeing this as an opportunity to mess with the almighty Luca, the devil.

Bianca was dozing off in the war room, when Julian entered. The lines and markings on the map had begun to blur together long before she realized it, exhaustion pulling at her in waves. She had been sitting there for hours, elbows braced on the table, chin resting lightly against her knuckles, trying to think three steps ahead of problems that refused to stay still.

The creaking of the warehouse door jerked her awake and she quickly turned to the entrance.

"What are you doing here?" she snapped.

Julian stepped fully into the room. "Don has been trying to reach you."

Bianca's brows furrowed immediately. "Oh my God! My phone is in my bag. What did he say?" Her bag sat abandoned a few feet away, exactly where she had dropped it earlier, forgotten in the middle of everything else weighing on her mind.

Julian shook his head slightly. "He has to talk to you so maybe when he gets back tonight but I need to talk to you too." Julian said.

"I don't think we have anything else to talk about." She turned slightly back toward the table.

He took a step closer instead. "Just give me a minute, okay?"

"Fine. What is it?" Bianca asked. She crossed her arms loosely, her eyes locking onto his.

"You're right. Everything you said was right about me, about my insecurities and about how I blame Luca for everything. But truly, I cannot take all the blame, Bianca. I blame my mother also."

"Julian...Look, I'm sorry." Bianca started.

Julian shook his head almost immediately, stepping in before she could go any further. "No..no...listen. You may not say it but where you are now, my mother has been there." Julian said.