

Mafia God 283

Chapter 283: Get Some Sleep

"No. But I'm guessing it has something to do with the plans over there." Marco responded.

Vee understood that the absence of specificity was itself specific and that the details were not for open air.

"Alright." Luca said. "Get some sleep, Marco."

Vee was already readjusting her nightdress, pulling the fabric down from where it had migrated to somewhere around her waist. The nightdress had not had a quiet evening. She smoothed it down and settled back against the headboard.

Luca set the phone back on the nightstand. "We cannot catch a break," he said.

Vee looked at him. "We?" She said with one eyebrow ascending to a height that communicated volumes. "No. You cannot catch a break. Unless your wife is coming to New York to shoot me again, I have nothing to worry about." She said wife with overt bitterness.

"I told you nothing like that is going to happen again," he said. "Besides—" He paused. "I think it's a good idea that she is coming."

Vee turned to look at him. The look on her face was in the general neighbourhood of murderous — it shared a postcode with murderous.

Luca held up a hand. "Hear me out."

"This should be exceptional," she said prepared to be deeply unimpressed.

"Marco and I believe she and Julian are working together. All these unexplained things with Cassidy—" He let that sit, knowing she would fill the space with her own catalogue of the same events.

Her teeth found her lower lip. She bit it once, released it, bit it again — the unconscious physical manifestation of an internal negotiation.

Then she turned to him.

"I have to tell you something."

He waited.

"And I need you to promise me—For my sake. For my sister's sake. That you will not get angry."

"What is it?" Luca asked.

"See!" Vee pointed at him. "You are angry already!"

"I'm not—" He stopped. Took a breath. Performed the internal exercise of relocating his tone from one register to another through sheer force of will. "I'm not angry."

She did not appear fully convinced. She pulled her knees up toward her chest slightly, a subtle self-containment, her fingers finding each other in her lap. "I'll do anything you want, Luca. But please, don't do anything rash." She paused. "As a matter of fact, don't even speak about it with anyone else. Not even Marco."

He kept his face neutral. It required some effort. "Vee. Speak."

"I'm afraid of what you will do." She said it plainly, looking directly at him. "You have to give me your word." She held his gaze. "Actually give it to me. Not just words."

"I promise not to get mad," he said.

Vee shook her head. "That's not enough." She didn't need his feelings managed. She needed his behaviour managed, which was an entirely different and considerably more complex ask.

He looked at her hands, still moving against each other in her lap. He looked at her face — the set of it, the worry in it. "I promise not to react," Luca finally said.

Vee hoped to God that was enough. If Luca reacted — when Luca reacted, some honest part of her corrected — her sister would be caught in the radius of it. Valentina who was carrying Ricardo's child, planning a wedding. She took a breath. "Before I came to Italy," she began, "Ricardo told me—" She paused.

"Bianca blackmailed him." She held Luca's gaze as she said it. "Into giving her information about me."

The silence lasted exactly one second. One single, complete second in which the room held its breath and Luca processed what she had just said and the information made its way from his ears to his brain.

"Son of a fucking bitch!!!" he roared.

She had known. She had known this was coming. She had made him promise specifically because she had known, and the promise had lasted approximately four seconds past the information, which was — she would note for the record — even shorter than she'd feared.

"Luca!"

"Did he give it?"

"Luca, please—" She leaned forward to her knees. "You promised."

"Did he give it?" He wasn't hearing her. Or he was hearing her and the information wasn't reaching the part of his brain that made decisions.

"Yes!"

"I swear to God—" He began moving. He threw back the sheets. His feet hit the floor. He was standing, and then he was moving through the room. He looked for his shorts — scanning the bed with impatient eyes.

"Luca — wait—"

He wasn't waiting.

"See, this is why I didn't want to tell you! This is exactly why—"

He had found his shorts. He pulled them on with speed, and then he was moving again — scanning the room, covering ground, searching for his shirt.

Vee did the only thing available to her. She got out of bed and put herself in his path, planting herself directly between him and the door. "Luca." She put both hands on his chest. Flat palms, physical contact, trying to transfer some of her stillness into him through the simple fact of touch. "Luca. Please."

He looked through her. The eyes that were warm and dark when they were in bed were somewhere else entirely right now.

"Think about Valentina," she said. "Please. Think about what this does to her."

"He dies." His words were delivered with a coldness so complete, so utterly absent of emotion that it was somehow worse than the roar had been.

"Luca!" Her voice cracked on his name. "Please — please — please —"

He moved around her. She moved with him.

"Is this why you came to Italy?"

"Yes," she said. "Yes. That's why I came."

"And you lied to me again."

"Luca—" She stepped toward him. "You have to understand. When I came to Italy, Valentina had just told me she was pregnant. Ricardo's baby. She had just told me. What was I supposed to do — walk in here and hand you a reason to destroy the father of her child before she'd even had the chance to—"