

Mafia God 302

Chapter 302: Its Been Quite The Experience

Valentina pulled back slightly, her cheeks flushing with sheepish embarrassment. "Sorry," she said, offering an apologetic smile.

Ricardo watched the exchange with admiration, clearly touched by the warmth of the moment. Luca, too, couldn't help the faint smile that tugged at his lips.

Nonnina cupped Valentina's face tenderly, her wise eyes scanning her with maternal concern. "Come stai, cara?" she asked softly. "The piccolo bambino?"

"We are fine," Valentina replied warmly.

The genuine affection between Valentina and Nonnina was undeniable, further solidifying Valentina's place. Valentina had more chemistry with everyone, it seemed like Bianca herself was the one invited to dinner.

"Come on, sit, mio figlio. I'll join you in a minute," Nonnina said gently. She moved toward Luca, waving away the maid who had stepped forward to serve him. She spooned a generous portion of food onto his plate.

When she finished, Luca reached for her hand and lifted her fingers to his lips, placing a gentle kiss upon them. "Grazie, Nonni," he murmured.

She patted his hair affectionately, a gesture that made him look, for a fleeting moment, like a little boy. "Mangia bene," she instructed before making her way to the chair beside Valentina.

The maids completed their service, ensuring everyone's plates were filled and glasses replenished. Once satisfied, they filed out of the dining room.

"Enjoy," Bianca said gracefully, lifting her own fork as she surveyed her guests with a poised smile.

They all began to eat. Bianca guided the discussion with carefully chosen questions about the engagement and the upcoming wedding.

"So, Valentina," she began smoothly, "have you set a date yet? I imagine planning such an event must be both exciting and overwhelming."

Valentina dabbed her lips with a napkin before responding. "Yes, it's been quite the experience, but a wonderful one. There's so much to consider, but thankfully, I've had a lot of help."

Bianca nodded encouragingly, subtly steering the conversation. "Family support makes all the difference, doesn't it?"

Valentina smiled, fully aware of the underlying intention behind Bianca's inquiry. She had anticipated this line of questioning and was careful with her words. Not once did she allow Veronica's name to surface. Instead, she shifted the focus seamlessly.

"I owe so much to Nonnina and Luca," she said warmly, turning toward them with genuine gratitude. "They've been incredible throughout the process."

Nonnina beamed, reaching over to squeeze Valentina's hand. Luca, meanwhile, simply raised a glass of wine. At the rate, he was drinking, he would be half dead by the time he returned to Veronica.

Valentina continued, her eyes sparkling as she recounted the experience. "Luca even took me shopping for my wedding dress and accessories. I never dreamed I would be able to afford something like that. It felt like stepping into a fairy tale."

Ricardo smiled proudly at her. "I'm almost afraid to see the final result—I might forget how to breathe."

Laughter rippled around the table, easing any lingering tension. Bianca maintained her composed smile, though inwardly she acknowledged Valentina's skillful navigation of the conversation. Her attempt to introduce Veronica into the discussion had been deftly sidestepped.

Still, she remained patient. There would be other opportunities. Nonnina chimed in every now and then as she offered suggestions about colours, themes, and the guests who would be travelling from Italy for the wedding.

"Peach and navy blue would be beautiful," she said, gesturing delicately with her fork. "Elegant, timeless. And of course, we must have proper music. A wedding without Italian songs is not a wedding at all."

Valentina smiled, clearly charmed by the older woman's involvement. "I would love that, Nonni. It means so much to have your input."

"You are marrying a good man," Bianca said. "He isn't one prone to taking mistresses." She took a measured sip of wine, her gaze lingering on Luca before subtly shifting toward Valentina.

Valentina returned the look with a sugary smile that didn't quite reach her eyes. "We are very possessive in our family," she replied sweetly. "The idea that any other woman would even think of taking our men carries consequences."

A faint tension rippled across the table. Luca, seated nearby, paused mid-bite, sensing the subtle escalation. Ricardo shifted slightly in his chair.

"Hmmm... You do not have to worry about this one," she continued. "I know first-hand he will be faithful."

"If you are referring to the brief time you dated..." she began.

The moment the words left her lips, Luca choked on his food. A violent cough erupted from him as he reached instinctively for his throat.

"Luciano!" Nonnina exclaimed, half-rising from her seat.

"You alright?" Valentina asked, her tone laced with feigned innocence as she watched him struggle.

"Yeah... yeah... I'm fine," Luca managed between coughs, grabbing a glass of water and taking several hurried sips.

"As I was saying..." Valentina continued, gracefully reclaiming the floor. "For the time you dated, he told me all about that. I'm surprised he didn't step out on you."

Luca slowly set his glass down, bracing himself for Bianca's reaction. Nonnina's eyes widened slightly. Ricardo cleared his throat softly, attempting to diffuse the tension.

Bianca's eyes remained fixed on Luca. She was looking for jealousy. But Luca, ever the master of composure, revealed nothing beyond the brief surprise he had shown when the topic of their past surfaced. "So you guys are quite honest with each other then," Bianca said.

"Oh, very," Valentina replied sweetly, taking a sip of her water. Her smile was serene, but her eyes sparkled with a knowing defiance.

Bianca inclined her head slightly, conceding the point. Then, she delivered her next move. "So, how is Marco? I forgot to invite him tonight."

Ricardo's fork paused midway to his mouth, his gaze shifting subtly toward Valentina. Valentina set her glass down with finality.

"I get it," she said softly. "I get it now." Valentina turned her gaze toward Luca. "I am so sorry," she continued. "I am so terribly sorry for what you have to go through. You poor thing."

Luca blinked, momentarily caught off guard.

"I apologise," she said, "but your wife is a bitch."