

Mafia God 309

Chapter 309: I Will Behave

He glanced back, meeting her gaze. "I will behave, Nonni," Luca assured her, a hint of mischief curling at the corner of his lips. "I'm not a maniac."

She arched a brow, clearly unconvinced. "You say that every time, and yet my rosary beads continue to suffer from overuse."

"Then pray for my soul a little less and for my patience a little more."

"My prayers cover everything," she retorted dryly. Nonnina remained where she stood, watching him until he disappeared up the stairs.

When Luca stepped into the bedroom, Bianca had just settled into bed, the sheets gathered around her as she adjusted the pillows behind her. She looked up at the sound of his entrance, her expression brightening instantly.

"Amore mio," she said, startled but pleased, instinctively moving to swing her legs over the side of the bed to greet him properly.

Luca lifted a hand, stopping her with a simple gesture. "Stay," he said quietly.

Bianca paused. Luca loosened his tie and walked past the bed, heading for the sofa. He sank into it with a weary exhale, leaning forward with his elbows resting on his knees, hands loosely clasped. "Is everything okay?" Bianca asked. She shifted against the pillows. "Any word about Don?"

His gaze drifted to the patterned rug beneath his feet, unfocused. The silence stretched long enough for Bianca's worry to deepen.

"Luciano?" she called again, more gently this time.

He inhaled slowly. "I've known my brother all my life," Luca began. "He's never had the brains to pull off anything successfully."

Bianca's lips curved into a small, amused smile. "Don says the same thing," she replied, a soft chuckle escaping her.

Luca huffed a quiet laugh. "That sounds about right."

"So," she prompted gently, "what's troubling you?"

Luca leaned back into the sofa, running a hand over his face before fixing his gaze on her. "The amount of planning that went into this," he continued slowly, choosing each word with care, "the pieces that were moved, the time, the patience... it's incredible." He shook his head slightly, still trying to comprehend the scale of it. "Every step was calculated. Nothing was left to chance."

Bianca's amusement faded, replaced by a thoughtful frown. She pulled the sheets closer around her, sensing the gravity of his realization. "You think Julian didn't act alone?"

"I'm certain of it," Luca replied. "Julian doesn't possess that kind of foresight. He's impulsive, reckless. This... this was orchestrated by someone with vision, someone who understands strategy and knows how to manipulate people like chess pieces. And it all started with the information that Ricardo gave you."

"What are you saying? What does that have to do with anything?" Bianca asked, her brows knitting together in confusion. She pushed herself upright against the headboard. "The information Ricardo gave me was centred on your mistress. This is something else entirely."

"I should have talked to Ricardo sooner," he admitted. "But I was just so blinded by anger, I didn't trust myself not to kill him. You found a pawn in what he told you," he continued. "A stupid, naïve, and vengeful ex-lover, and you narrowed in on him. Cassidy. Veronica's boyfriend. A high school teacher turned Bastione famiglia."

Bianca blinked, clearly taken aback. "Yes, Ricardo did give me details about that," she acknowledged cautiously, "but what would I do with him?"

"Then you teamed up with Julian," he said. "I'm sure you fed him some lines about him being the next Don. Julian has always craved recognition. It wouldn't have taken much to plant that seed."

Bianca stared at him, her lips parting in disbelief. "Luca, wherever you are going with this, please stop. Please! You are accusing me of treason. Are you planning to have me killed? You truly think I would betray you? Betray this family? So now I'm some criminal mastermind? You're wrong, Luca. Completely and utterly wrong."

"Then you started to pull the strings," he continued. "Moving pieces, moving people, dropping bits and pieces of information here and there. Your plan was elegant, beautiful truly."

"Luca, please stop... I'm begging you." Bianca's voice trembled as the words left her lips. She had slipped fully upright in the bed now.

"Now, my father is missing or dead," he continued. "We have lost many men on our side. Julian is the acting Don until Father's death is confirmed. And Veronica takes the fall for all of it, leaving you to pick up the pieces of my broken heart." He let out a hollow chuckle, devoid of humor. "God! If you could fight for the wrong man this much, imagine what you could do when the right man for you comes along."

Bianca shook her head frantically, tears beginning to blur her vision. "Luca, you have to believe me. I didn't do anything. I swear to you. I swear to Mary, mother of sweet Jesus, I didn't do anything." Her voice cracked as she reached out toward him, desperation etched into every movement. "Luciano... please... please... look at me."

"You made a mistake, Bianca," Luca said softly, the gentleness of his tone only made the accusation more devastating. "The men my father took on his raid weren't just Genovese famiglia. They were also Vitale famiglia." He paused, letting the implication settle heavily in the air before adding, "Your famiglia."

Bianca's breath caught in her throat. The color drained from her face. "You didn't know that, did you?" Luca pressed, tilting his head slightly as he studied her reaction. She shook her head vehemently, tears spilling freely now. "Luca... I didn't know anything. I swear it. I would never put my own family—or yours—in danger." Her hands trembled as she pressed them to her chest. "You think I'm capable of orchestrating all of this?"

Bianca let out a shaky sob. "Your brother..." she began. "I didn't know anything. Your brother..."

"No way you can convince me that Julian did all of this by himself," Luca said, his voice edged with cold certainty. "The man has the brain of a nut. A peanut." He let out a humorless chuckle. "I had a long talk with your father today. Thankfully, unlike my father, he believes there is something such as secure lines."