

## **Mafia God 311**

### Chapter 311: You Still Haven't Changed

Over the years, he had meticulously crafted his escape routes with that singular promise in mind. Every operation, every raid, every potential disaster included a path that would ultimately lead him back to her. It was the one constant in a life defined by chaos.

So when he finally arrived at her door, shoddily held together after the failed attack, he was certain those were his final moments. Blood soaked through his shirt, each breath a laborious effort. The world around him had blurred into a haze of pain and fading consciousness, but the sight of that door—her door—held him together.

When it creaked open, the first expression on Carol's face was one of pure shock, her eyes widening as they took in the battered figure leaning heavily against her frame. That shock, however, quickly transformed into irritation, her brows knitting together.

Even on the brink of death, he found her reaction endlessly amusing. The look on her face was priceless. He would almost die over and over again if it meant witnessing that exact expression every time.

He had been in and out of consciousness for what felt like an eternity, drifting through fragments of memory and pain. But this time, as his eyelids fluttered open, there was a strange clarity. His eyes seemed willing to stay open, if only for a little while longer.

The room around him came slowly into focus. Every breath was a reminder of his mortality, every ache a testament to the years he had spent living on borrowed time.

A faint, self-deprecating smile tugged at his lips. He was not the man he once was. The strength, the invincibility, the reckless confidence of his youth had given way to the undeniable truth of age. He was getting too old for this shit.

What was he thinking? Leading a raid at his age. But then, this failure was not his fault. Massimo Genovese had survived for far too long to miscalculate so disastrously. The raid had been precise, the strategy flawless—until it wasn't. Someone had betrayed him.

And the list of suspects was very, very, very small.

"You still haven't changed." Carol's voice drifted into the room. She appeared carrying a bowl of warm water and a towel. "Don first, man later," she continued, setting the bowl on the bedside table. "I can practically see your brain working. Plotting revenge already, are we? You've barely escaped death and you're still thinking. Honestly, Massimo, you're exhausting."

Massimo shifted his head slightly to look at her. "I thought I was dying," he rasped, his voice rough from disuse.

"Well, you're not," Carol replied briskly. She dipped the towel into the bowl, wringing it out before pressing it gently against his shoulder. "And now that you are fully awake," she added, "you can do us all a favour and go back to the hole you crawled out from." She continued to fuss over him, running the damp towel over his chest and arms, muttering under her breath as she worked. "Do you have any idea how far I've gone in the world to get away from you? New city, new life, peace and quiet—then you show up bleeding all over my doorstep like some cursed stray cat."

Massimo heard none of it. Her words faded into a distant hum as he focused solely on the movement of her lips. The familiar cadence of her voice, the expressive way her brows arched when she was annoyed, the warmth hidden beneath her sharp tongue—it was all aching familiar. Twenty-one years had passed, yet she remained unchanged, as vibrant and infuriating as ever.

"Once you're patched up, you're leaving. I've had enough drama to last several lifetimes."

Twenty-one years, and the woman was still gloriously insane. As Carol continued to yap, punctuating her complaints with dramatic gestures, Massimo decided it was time to silence the storm. Summoning what little strength he had, he reached out and caught her by the arm. The sudden movement startled her, cutting her tirade short as she stumbled slightly toward him.

"Massimo, what on earth—"

Before she could finish, he pulled her closer. Their faces were inches apart, her eyes wide with surprise.

Without another moment's hesitation, he kissed her.

"Twenty-one years and you still use that stupid peppermint lip balm," Massimo murmured as he slowly broke away from the kiss.

Carol stared at him, utterly flustered. Words failed her. Her lips parted to unleash one of her signature tirades, but nothing came out. A faint flush crept up her cheeks, betraying the storm of emotions she struggled to contain.

Massimo's eyes sparkled with satisfaction. "Still works like a charm," he added, a ghost of a smile tugging at his lips before he leaned back into the pillows. He closed his eyes, surrendering momentarily to the comforting silence that settled between them.

Carol remained rooted to the spot, her heart pounding wildly in her chest. Twenty-one years of distance, resentment seemed to crumble in the face of his presence. "Arrogant bastard," she muttered under her breath. She picked up the towel she had been using to clean him, squeezed out the remaining water. Then, with a sudden burst of irritation, she flung it squarely onto his face.

"Clean your own damn body yourself," she snapped, her voice regaining its familiar edge as she turned on her heel and stormed out of the room.

Massimo chuckled softly beneath the towel, the sound rumbling through his chest despite the pain it caused. He pulled the damp cloth from his face and let it rest loosely in his hand. The weakness in his body returned with full force, but this time it was accompanied by a sense of peace he hadn't felt in years. As exhaustion claimed him, the faintest smile lingered on his lips.

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When Luca got home—well, home nowadays was Veronica's house, so yes, home, Veronica was waiting in the living room, curled up on the couch with a light blanket draped over her legs. The moment she heard the door open, she looked up, relief washing over her features. Rising quickly, she crossed the room to meet him.