

Mafia God 320

Chapter 320: You Are Always Welcome Here

"You are always welcome here," Vee continued warmly. "Stay as long as you want. But next time, put on something before rushing out of the house."

Val groaned dramatically, covering her face with both hands. "Ugh... don't remind me, please," she muttered, her embarrassment returning full force.

Vee laughed softly. "Well, it certainly made an impression. Besides, it's not like Marco minded."

Val lowered her hands slowly, narrowing her eyes. "What do you mean?"

Vee raised an eyebrow knowingly as she sprinkled a bit of powdered sugar over the pancakes. "Marco does have the hots for you."

"Yeah?" she asked, trying to sound casual, the slight flush on her cheeks betrayed her.

"Yeah," Vee confirmed. "It's written all over his face. It's not exactly subtle anymore. Do you maybe feel anything for him?"

Val remained silent for a moment, her fingers tracing the edge of the countertop as she searched for an honest answer.

"I don't know how things got so complicated. I'm beginning to question everything. I'm not even sure I have my own head screwed right anymore," Valentina confessed.

"But you do feel something?" she asked, careful not to push too hard yet unwilling to ignore the truth lingering between them.

Val hesitated, her gaze dropping to the floor. After a moment, she exhaled slowly and nodded. "Yes..." she admitted.

Vee absorbed the confession with a thoughtful silence. "Val, you are getting married in a few weeks. If you need time to—"

"No!" Val interrupted sharply, her head snapping up. "No... I am getting married. This is just piqued curiosity. It will pass." She forced a small, resolute smile, trying to convince herself as much as her sister. "Ricardo and I have built a life together. He's the father of my child. I'm not throwing that away over... confusion."

Vee sensed that Val's emotions were far more complex than she was willing to admit, she chose to respect her wishes. With a gentle nod, she returned her attention to the pancakes. "Alright," she said softly. "But remember, whatever happens, you don't have to face it alone."

Soon after, the house filled with the comforting sounds of breakfast. Luca joined them, freshly dressed for his trip. The dining table quickly became a stage for lively banter.

Val wasted no time in resuming her teasing. Marco, seated quietly beside them, found himself caught between amusement and contemplation. Vee's laughter rang freely, her earlier worries momentarily forgotten, while Luca's playful threats of "fire and brimstone" only fueled Val's relentless teasing.

Despite the humor, an undercurrent of tension lingered, growing more pronounced as the meal drew to a close. The reality of Luca's impending departure began to settle over them.

When it was finally time for him to leave for Italy, the laughter faded, replaced by a heavy silence. Luca stood near the entrance, his travel bag resting by his side. Vee approached him first, her composure wavering as she wrapped her arms around him.

Even with Luca promising again and again that he would be fine, Vee couldn't stop crying. Luca held her gently, whispering reassurances into her hair.

"I'll be back before you know it," he murmured, pressing a lingering kiss to her forehead. "You're safe here. Marco is here. Trust me."

Vee nodded, her tears continued to fall. "You better come back," she whispered, attempting a fragile smile. "I'm not done arguing with you yet."

Valentina stepped forward next, her usual playful demeanor replaced with genuine emotion. She wrapped her arms around Luca, holding him tightly. "Save my sister and I promise to stop teasing you."

Luca chuckled softly. "Now that is motivation," he replied, squeezing her affectionately. "But I'll hold you to that."

Finally, Luca turned to Marco. The two men locked eyes. No words were necessary. Luca's gaze carried a command: Protect them. Marco responded with a subtle nod.

With one last look at the women he loved and trusted, Luca stepped into the waiting car. As it disappeared down the driveway, Marco gently guided Vee and Val back into the house, offering quiet reassurances.

Later that afternoon, Marco, exhausted from his journey and the events that followed, retreated to one of the upstairs bedrooms. After a long, much-needed shower, he stepped out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped securely around his waist, droplets of water still clinging to his skin.

As he crossed into the room, he froze.

Valentina stood near the bed, now dressed in one of Vee's comfortable outfits—a soft sweater and leggings. She looked equally startled to see him, her eyes widening.

"Oh, I—I thought..." she stammered, tucking a loose strand of hair behind her ear. "I wanted to take a nap. I didn't know you were using this room."

Marco immediately straightened, instinctively reaching for the edge of the towel as if to ensure it was secure. "I can move to another room," he offered quickly.

"No, no, you were here first. I'll go," Val replied, taking a hesitant step toward the door. Yet, despite her words, her gaze drifted downward, drawn involuntarily to the sculpted lines of his torso.

Her eyes widened, and she let out a soft, breathless exclamation. "Oh... wow! Just... wow!"

"What?" Marco asked as he watched Valentina's wide-eyed reaction.

Val took a tentative step forward. "I knew you were ripped," she said, her voice filled with genuine admiration, "I just didn't know you were this ripped." Before he could respond, she reached out and held both his arms, giving them an exploratory squeeze. "Wow..."

Marco chuckled lightly while remaining acutely aware of the intimacy of the moment.

"My God!" Val continued, clearly lost in her appreciation. Her curiosity overrode any sense of propriety, and she seemed entirely absorbed in the discovery. She didn't even realize when her fingers drifted from his arms to his chest, tracing the firm contours of his muscles. Slowly, her hands moved downward, following the defined lines of his torso to his abs and stomach. "Whew..." she exhaled, the sight alone had momentarily stolen her breath.

Marco's smile faltered, replaced by a more serious expression. He swallowed hard, fighting the instinct to respond to her touch, reminding himself of the complicated reality of their lives.