

## **Mafia God 330**

### Chapter 330: I Hate This

A small, cold piece of metal.

Relief surged through him as he pulled out the cuff key, slick with blood. He dropped the blade onto the tray and removed the cloth from his mouth, gasping for air as he rode out the waves of agony for a few seconds. Sweat drenched his skin, and his vision blurred momentarily, but he forced himself to remain conscious.

With shaking hands, he guided the key toward the ankle cuff. The faint click as it turned in the lock sounded like salvation. One restraint fell away, then the other, until he was finally free. Luca allowed himself only a brief moment of stillness before pushing himself upright, ignoring the dizziness and the fresh blood seeping from his shoulder and side. He had no time to waste.

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Veronica moved restlessly through the house, her anxiety growing with every passing hour. The once comforting space now felt suffocating, each room echoing with Luca's absence. She wrapped her arms around herself as she paced, her mind racing with unanswered questions.

Nonnina watched her from the kitchen doorway, her eyes narrowed with a scrutiny that Veronica had noticed since the moment she arrived.

Vee didn't understand it. Every time she cried, Nonnina appeared with a steaming cup of some strange herbal tea. Every time she refused food, insisting she had no appetite, the same tea was pressed into her hands with gentle insistence.

But it wasn't the usual blend. This one carried a different taste. It soothed her nerves, yet left her feeling oddly drowsy.

"I hate this," she murmured softly. "I hate not knowing."

Was he safe? Why hadn't he reached out? The not knowing was the hardest part.

"Zuccherino, sit down," Nonnina said, her voice firm yet laced with affection as she watched Veronica pace restlessly across the living room.

"I'm fine, Nonni," Vee replied distractedly, barely slowing her steps. Her fingers twisted anxiously in the hem of her sweater, her eyes darting toward the door, expecting Luca to appear at any moment.

Nonnina's gaze hardened slightly. "I didn't ask how you were," she said. "I said, sit down."

Veronica turned to face her, frustration bubbling to the surface. "How can you be this calm?" she asked, her voice trembling. "It's been days already. Days, Nonni! No word, no message... nothing."

Nonnina sighed softly, the lines on her face deepening. "You get used to it," she replied.

What she did not say was that calmness was not the absence of fear. Beneath her composed exterior, her heart ached just as fiercely as Veronica's.

Vee dropped onto the sofa, her hands covering her face as a shaky breath escaped her lips. "I hate this," she whispered. "I hate feeling so helpless."

Nonnina moved closer, placing a gentle hand on Veronica's shoulder. "Luciano is stronger than you think," she murmured. "And Marco is here. You are not alone, cara mia."

Suddenly, the silence was shattered by the sound of hurried footsteps from upstairs. Both women looked up just as Marco came rushing down the staircase. He was in the process of throwing on his shirt, his expression grim.

"Marco?" Vee shot to her feet, her heart pounding. "What's wrong?"

Marco reached the bottom of the stairs, buttoning his shirt. "Get upstairs," he ordered sharply. "Nonni, you too!"

The sudden command sent a chill through the room. Veronica stepped forward, confusion and fear written across her face. "Marco!" she called, desperation edging her voice.

"It's fine. I have it all handled. Okay? Just go upstairs,"

"Marco!" Veronica called after him, her heart pounding with fear. "What's happening?"

He paused briefly at the doorway, turning just enough to meet her gaze. "Trust me, I won't let anything happen to you." With that, he rushed out of the house.

Marco moved swiftly down the driveway toward the main gate, where a group of men stood waiting. At their center stood Alessandro, Julian's trusted capo. Marco slowed his pace as he approached, his posture relaxed but his senses fully alert. "Alessandro," he greeted evenly. "How can I help you today?"

Alessandro stepped forward. "Marco... can you let me in? Just me, please. This madness between Luca and Julian needs to stop."

"Hand over your weapons to your men," Marco instructed.

Without hesitation, Alessandro complied. He removed a handgun from the small of his back and passed it to one of his men. Then, raising his jacket and spreading his arms slightly, he allowed Marco to see that he carried nothing else.

Marco gave a slight nod. "Open the small gate," he ordered the guards.

The metal gate clicked open, allowing Alessandro to step inside while his men remained outside, their watchful eyes tracking every movement.

"Marco," Alessandro began. "Julian has gone mad. And honestly, he is not the hill I want to die on." He exhaled deeply before continuing. "So please, let's find a way to sort this out."

Marco crossed his arms, maintaining a guarded stance. "You've always been a reasonable man, Alessandro," he said. "But reason alone doesn't bring you here. What does Julian want?"

"He sent me here to tell you he has Luca in holding, and you have twenty-four hours to bring the girl into my custody or Luca dies," Alessandro explained.

Marco's expression hardened instantly, his jaw tightening as he absorbed the ultimatum. Though he remained outwardly calm, a storm of emotions churned beneath the surface. "That's not happening," he replied firmly, his tone leaving no room for negotiation.

Alessandro sighed, clearly anticipating the response. "Look, he didn't ask me to come here and talk it out with you like this," he admitted. "Julian will get his way, and he will get the girl. I'm trying to prevent unnecessary bloodshed."

"By asking me to hand her over? That's your solution?"

"I heard Don is still alive," Alessandro continued, ignoring the edge in Marco's voice. "What is going to happen when he comes back? This feud between the brothers will tear the famiglia apart. And when that happens, who will die for it? You? Me? Men who have nothing to do with their personal war?"