

## **Mafia God 337**

### Chapter 337: Some Things Never Change

"You look..." Carol paused, tilting her head slightly, "...exactly the same."

Nonnina scoffed. "Liar."

"Okay older but the same."

Nonnina rolled her eyes, but the smile didn't leave her face.

"It's good to see you, Nonnina," Carol said.

Nonnina nodded, swallowing past the lump in her throat. "You too."

Carol's eyes moved past Nonnina... and landed on Valentina. Valentina stood there, trying her best to appear composed. Carol's eyes swept over her face, her posture... and then dropped to her stomach.

One brow lifted—just barely.

"Ma..." Marco's voice cut in. He stepped slightly closer, gesturing toward Valentina. "This is Valentina Scalse."

"Its nice to meet you, uh...Mama Luca? I—I don't know what to call you..." Valentina said, slightly tangled with nerves. She shifted her weight unconsciously. Under normal circumstances, she handled people well. Conversations, charm, even difficult personalities—she could manage. But this woman?

This woman was different. Carol looked like the kind of person who could smile warmly and still dismantle your entire life in five sentences.

Carol's lips twitched, amused. "Mama Luca was cute when he was five, Now, it just makes me feel old." She waved a dismissive hand. "Call me Carol."

Valentina let out a small, relieved laugh. "Okay... Carol."

"So," Carol continued casually, "how is your sister? She is your sister, right?"

"Yes," she answered, nodding. "She is. She's... she's fine. Well—" she hesitated, exhaling softly, "the doctors said exhaustion, dehydration, high blood pressure..." Her voice trailed slightly at the end.

Carol hummed. "Classic," she said.

Valentina frowned faintly.

Carol gave a small shrug. "Some things never change."

Valentina's brows drew together, confusion flickering across her face. "What... what does that mean?" she asked, her tone cautious but curious.

"Oh, I don't mean to worry you, sweetie," she said. "But those are the symptoms of being with a Genovese."

"Yeah... yeah. Oh... it's been an intense couple of days."

Marco muttered under his breath from beside them. "That's one way to put it."

"Is she awake yet?" Carol asked, her tone turning more direct.

"No," Valentina said.

"Then you can go get some rest, sweetie. Do not exert yourself too much," Carol instructed.

Valentina opened her mouth like she might argue, but did a rethink. It wasn't that she didn't want to protest. It was that Carol had said it in a way that made resistance feel... pointless.

"I keep telling her that," Nonnina chipped in immediately, stepping forward with a small, exasperated wave of her hand. "Too much energy. Always jumping up and down like she's not carrying a whole human being. I don't know what to do with her anymore."

Valentina let out a soft groan. "I'm not jumping—"

"You do jump," Marco cut in.

"I do not."

"You do."

"I do not," she corrected.

"You do," he replied flatly.

Carol watched the exchange with amusement, her lips curving just slightly before her eyes dropped—again—to Valentina's stomach. "Is that Marco's baby?" Carol asked, casually enough that it took a second for the question to actually register.

Valentina blinked. "What—uh—no—no," she said quickly, her hands instinctively coming up. "It's Ricardo's."

Carol's brow lifted, curiosity replacing amusement. "Ricardo?" she repeated, turning her head toward Nonnina. "Do I know him?"

Nonnina tilted her head, thinking. "I doubt you will remember," she said slowly. "My sister—she had a boy?"

Carol stared at her for a second. Then her face lit up in recognition. "Oh—yeah," she breathed, snapping her fingers lightly. "Wow. Time does fly, uhn?" she said, glancing back at Valentina with a new kind of interest. "He's old enough to be making babies now."

Valentina gave a weak smile. "Apparently."

"Go get some rest," Carol said, more firmly now. "All of you, actually. You all look like shit."

"I have to be here," Marco insisted.

Carol turned to him slowly, one brow arching. "What?" she asked. "Did Luca make you her personal bodyguard?"

"Yeah," he said, shrugging slightly. "Something like that."

Carol shook her head slowly, a faint smile tugging at her lips like she'd seen this exact scene play out a hundred times before. "Typical," she murmured. "I will be here," she said. "I will stay with her, okay? All of you—take a break."

It was an order. Marco hesitated. His gaze flickered toward the hallway again, jaw tightening slightly as if he were calculating every possible outcome of leaving—even for a moment.

Carol turned her eyes on him. Just a look. That was all it took. Marco exhaled sharply through his nose, surrendering to a force he had long since accepted he couldn't fight.

"Fine," he muttered.

"Good," Carol replied, satisfied.

Valentina, who had been watching this entire exchange with growing fascination, let out a soft laugh, her eyes bright with amusement. "Do you do that with Luca too?" she asked. "Because if you do, I need lessons."

Marco snorted under his breath. Carol let out a quiet chuckle, shaking her head.

"Oh no," she said, waving a hand dismissively. "It doesn't work on him."

Valentina's face fell in exaggerated disappointment. "Tragic."

"He humours me sometimes," Carol continued, her lips curving faintly at the thought, "but the boy is crazy."

"Oh my God, I love this woman!" Valentina yelped, clapping a hand lightly over her mouth like she hadn't meant to say it out loud.

Marco shook his head, stepping closer as he placed his hands gently on her shoulders, turning her toward the exit. "Okay..." he said, steering her forward before she could spiral into whatever chaotic admiration she was clearly building. "Let's get you home before you start thinking of ways to make Luca's life miserable."

As they walked off, Marco lifted a hand in a small wave. "See ya, ma."

Carol returned the gesture with a subtle flick of her fingers, watching them go. She let out a slow breath, the strength in her posture softening just a fraction as she turned and made her way to one of the chairs in the waiting area. She lowered herself into it gracefully, crossing one leg over the other, her gaze settling toward the corridor where the room lay.