

Mafia God 338

Chapter 338: I've Been In Worse Situations

Luca lay still against the stiff white sheets, one arm stretched out while dark red blood slipped steadily through the IV line and into his veins. The rhythmic beeping of the monitor beside him filled the room. His head rested against the pillow, eyes half-lidded, not quite asleep. His thoughts drifted in and out—fragments of voices, flashes of memory, the constant replay of everything that had happened in the last few days.

The door opened quietly. Luca already knew who it was.

"Luciano..." Don Genovese's voice came softly.

That made Luca open his eyes.

"Father," he greeted. His gaze followed Massimo as the older man stepped further into the room, closing the door behind him. "How are you doing?" Luca asked. There was sadness in his father's eyes.

Massimo let out a quiet breath, moving closer until he stood beside the bed, looking down at his son. "I should be asking you that."

"I've been in worse situations, father," he said lightly, the corner of his mouth lifting. "Don't tell me you spent a couple of days with mother and grew soft."

Massimo's lips curved despite himself. "A dangerous accusation," he replied. "I spoke to Enzo," he said after a moment. "Bianca's father. He told me what you said," Massimo continued. "About Bianca. Is that true, or are you merely looking for a way to get out of the marriage?"

Luca exhaled slowly, turning his head just enough to meet his father's eyes fully. "It's true," he said. "I just have to prove it," he added. "I'm hoping Julian's lips will grow loose now."

"I'm sorry," Massimo held his gaze. "I'm sorry for what you have been through."

"Okay... Mum has broken you," Luca said, squinting at him, trying to figure out if this was some elaborate hallucination brought on by blood loss.

"Listen to me, I'm sorry. Not just for what just happened... but for the past. Everything." Massimo paused, jaw tightening slightly. "I should have protected you more."

Luca stared at him. "And then what?" he asked. "Grow up to be a bitch?" His lips twitched faintly. "No, thank you."

It was Luca's way of deflecting. Massimo knew that.

"I did favour you," Massimo admitted.

Luca's brow furrowed slightly.

"I know that," Massimo continued, holding his gaze. "And because I did... I punished you more. So you would not become a target for my weakness."

Luca shifted slightly on the bed, wincing. "Dad," he said after a moment, his tone somewhere between awkward and strained, "this is making me really uncomfortable. We... we don't share feelings in this family," Luca added, gesturing weakly with his free hand. "It's weird."

"Maybe that's part of the problem."

"Or part of why we're still alive," Luca shot back.

"Ask whatever you want. Anything," Massimo repeated. "And I will make it happen."

That caught Luca off guard more than the apology had. His eyes narrowed slightly, suspicion slipping in.

"Why?" Luca asked. "You want to feel better about what you're about to do?" His gaze locked onto his father's, searching. "Kill your own son?"

"No. I want to feel better about being the reason you went through all of this."

Luca let the silence stretch for a moment after his father's words, his eyes drifting briefly to the slow drip of blood feeding into his veins. "Fine," he said eventually. "Since you're in a generous mood..." His gaze slid back to Massimo. "Give Veronica a free pass."

Massimo stilled. "What?"

Luca shifted slightly against the pillow, ignoring the dull pull of pain in his ribs. "You heard me."

Massimo's eyes narrowed. "No, Luciano. I heard the words. I'm asking if I understood them correctly."

"I'm not delirious yet, if that's what you're asking."

"That is exactly what I am asking," Massimo replied dryly. "You are asking me to release a woman who knows everything about this family. About you. About our operations—especially now, with whatever mess Julian has stirred up."

"Yeah," Luca said simply.

Massimo let out a sharp breath, running a hand over his face. "I can't," he said flatly. "Do you know how much she knows? If she walks away from the famiglia, she becomes a liability. A threat." His voice hardened. "A threat to you."

"Mother didn't turn out to be a threat to you, did she?"

Massimo's head snapped slightly toward him.

"You ran to her," Luca continued. "After all these years. You trusted her enough to walk back into her life like nothing could touch you there."

"That is different," Massimo said quickly.

"Is it?" Luca pressed, one brow lifting faintly. "I trust Veronica. She was going to be my Donna," he added. Luca swallowed, his gaze drifting briefly toward the ceiling before returning to his father. "Dad..." he started. "We are not men that should be loved," he said.

"No matter how badly we want it." His fingers curled slightly against the sheets, even admitting that cost him. "I want to let her go," he continued. "I want her to be free of the famiglia. Dad, we do not deserve love," he said. "We cannot have love, because the moment someone loves us..." He let out a faint breath. "...they become doomed."

"Keeping her with me is selfish," Luca finished, his gaze locking onto his father's once more. "I love her enough to let her go."

Massimo stood there for a long moment, weighing it all—the request, the risk, the conviction in Luca's voice. "Fine," he said at last. "I will take your word for it." His gaze sharpened slightly. "But if this turns out to be a mistake..."

"Then I will suffer the consequences."

After a second, Massimo gave a small nod.

"Feel better, Luca," he said, the Don receding just slightly to make room for the father again. Massimo turned slightly to leave, but Luca's voice stopped him.

"One more thing, father..."

Massimo paused, glancing back.

"You shouldn't be the one to do it," Luca said.

Understanding hit instantly. Massimo's eyes closed briefly, his jaw tightening as the meaning settled between them.