

Mafia God 342

Chapter 342: This Isn't Right

Marco stood at the foot of the sofa, both hands dragging down his face, his chest rising and falling with the effort of being a decent human being.

Val sat up and pulled her dress down. "I'm sorry....This isn't right. I'm sorry, I — Marco, I'm sorry."

"I know." He exhaled the words more than said them. He stared at the floor for a long moment.

Then he looked at her. "Make it right."

"What...what are you—"

"You can't marry him....You know that. Whatever you've been telling yourself — whatever story you've been rehearsing — tonight just burned it down. You know that."

"Marco—"

"You're going to stand in front of that man and say vows? After this? You'll look him in the eye and— And don't." He pointed. "Don't give me that line about loving him. I know what love looks like on your face, Val." He took one step closer. "You love me....Just me."

"Marco, I'm having Ricardo's baby."

He shook his head, the words didn't change anything. "I don't care!" he shot back. "I have never cared!"

Valentina stared up at him, stunned by how fiercely he said it.

"I have..." he dragged a hand through his bald head, pacing once before turning back to her, he needed movement just to breathe. "Yes. Yes, I admit it! I should have said something. But there were reasons,"

he continued. "Excuses, really. I thought I was too old for you. I thought my life was too dangerous for you." He shook his head again. "I gave myself too many reasons to stay away from you."

"And I ruined it," he added. "But it doesn't matter to me," he said, his eyes locking onto hers with an intensity that made it hard to look away. "None of it matters. I'll love that kid with everything I've got," he said. "Because I love you. I have always loved you," Marco continued, he had finally stopped fighting himself. "Long before you even started to see me as anything more than a friend."

"So please..." he added. "Please, Val... help me make it right."

Everything in her was pulling in opposite directions—loyalty, fear, love, guilt—none of it lining up neatly enough to make sense.

"I need to talk to Vee," she said finally.

"No," he said, shaking his head. "No."

"Marco—"

"Just decide for yourself," he cut in. "Just this once. This once." His hands hovered at his sides, he wanted to reach for her again but was forcing himself not to. "I'll find Ricardo," he added quickly. "Wherever he is, I'll hunt him down and bring him to you. Val...I'm begging you."

"I can't come back from this," he continued, his gaze unwavering. "Don't make me."

"What are you saying really?"

"I'm saying marry me instead," he said.

"Marco..." she said slowly, breathlessly. "You... are not thinking."

"I don't want to," he admitted. "I've spent the past year doing just that," he continued. "Thinking. Calculating. Staying away. Telling myself all the reasons this couldn't happen, shouldn't happen, wouldn't happen. And all that thinking?" he said. "It got me here. Got us here. Trapped with this stupid gap in between us."

Marco took a step closer, then another, until he was standing right in front of her. Slowly, he lowered himself to his knees before her.

"Marco..."

His fingers closed around hers carefully, he held on. Then his gaze dropped to the engagement ring on her finger. He slid it free. He set the ring on the coffee table. Marco looked back up at her then. "You didn't stop me," he said softly.

Valentina swallowed. He lifted her fingers to his lips and kissed them, eyes never leaving her face for long.

"It means you made a decision already," he whispered. "Just... marry me. Please, Val," he said again. "Please... please."

Her heart twisted. This was Marco. Steady, stubborn, impossible Marco. And he was kneeling in front of her.

Slowly, with her free hand, she reached for his cheek. The moment her palm touched his skin, his eyes closed.

He leaned into it.

"I used to think you were this gruff, angry mafia guy I loved to mess with," she said softly. "It was fun," she continued, her thumb brushing lightly against his cheek, "getting you all riled up and mad."

That made him let out the smallest breath of a laugh.

"This doesn't change that," she said. "I am still going to get you riled up and mad."

Marco opened his eyes then. "Wouldn't want it any other way."

Val cleared her throat and reached for what remained of her dignity. There wasn't much left, but she gathered it anyway, smoothing her dress with both hands like that would fix anything. "I should go. I should go now." She clarified. "Because Lord—" her eyes, completely without her permission, made one slow trip down his bare chest— "you are so hot my brain is on the fritz."

A smile tugged at his mouth.

"It's not funny," she told him.

"I'm not laughing."

"You're doing that thing with your face."

"You didn't even get to see the full view," he said.

"I—" She stopped. "Okay. Maybe a peek." She reconsidered before the sentence had even finished leaving her mouth. "Wait. No! No, absolutely not. Not yet." She pressed two fingers to her temple. Not yet? What did not yet mean? That implied a later.

Marco was watching her with undisguised amusement.

"I could," she said slowly, the thought assembling itself in real time, "pretend that you accidentally—like if it just happened to—" She caught the look on his face and stopped. "You know what. I'm not even going to go there. I'm not. I'm a grown woman and I'm going to walk out of this house with my last four brain cells intact and—"

Marco took her hand and guided it forward. Down his stomach — the muscles jumping slightly under her fingertips.

Past his belt and down to his cock. Val's brain filed a formal complaint. Her fingers, however, wrapped around him on their own — warm, thick, and semi hard.