

Mafia God 366

Chapter 366: Carry Yourself More Carefully

"And please," Carol added, "carry yourself more carefully. You are carrying a baby."

Valentina let out a soft chuckle. "I thought that would be a problem for you."

"Why?" Carol asked. "My son loves you. That's all I need to know...Say goodbye to Vee for me," she said.

With that, she turned and walked back inside. Val stood there smiling after her for a long moment.

The night was beautiful, yes—but mostly because someone had paid an obscene amount of money and employed an excellent decorating team.

The moon, frankly, was getting far too much credit. Val let out a breath and rested a hand over her stomach.

She was nineteen. Pregnant for one man. Completely in love with another. Marco, whom she had once thought of as the brother she never had. Her life, when laid out plainly, sounded insane.

Complicated was the polite word for it. A disaster was probably more accurate. And yet— Right now, the future did not look like disaster.

It looked... possible.

She felt arms wrap around her from behind. Val leaned back into him without thinking, fitting into Marco's body as though some part of her had always known exactly where she belonged. The heat of him settled instantly along her back, his chest solid against her.

Marco lowered his head slightly, close enough that his breath brushed near her hair. "What's on your mind?" he asked.

"Us," she replied.

"What about us?" he asked.

"It's nothing," she said. "Just the torture we have to endure."

He understood exactly what she meant. The waiting. The rules. The child. The love they had already admitted and were now expected to carry carefully, quietly. "It's going to be fine," he said. "Ricardo will be back."

Valentina turned then, shifting in his arms. "What if he doesn't come back?"

"It's up to you," he said, "to decide how long you want to wait for him." He shrugged slightly. He wasn't pushing, wasn't trying to steal a future simply because Don had, apparently, given him permission to pursue it without consequences.

Permission was not the point. She was. Her choice. Her timing.

"And how long," she asked softly, "are you willing to wait for me?"

"I'll always wait for you, Valentina," he said. "Always."

Marco wanted to kiss her. God, he wanted to. The urge was there immediately, written in the way his eyes dropped briefly to her mouth before lifting again. But he stopped himself. He had already said his part. Already pushed the truth into the open. Now he was determined to follow her lead on this, no matter how badly it tore at him.

It was entirely up to her now. He had spoken to the Don. Massimo had given him leave to pursue her without fear of consequences, and that should have felt like freedom. Approval changed nothing essential.

Ricardo was still missing. And until that changed, everything between them remained suspended—wanted, undeniable, and unfinished.

So Marco kept his hands where they were, steady at her waist, and said nothing more. She had to decide for herself when to stop waiting for him.

No one could make that decision for her. At some point, she would have to choose where loyalty ended and her life began.

"Come on, love," Marco said gently. "It's dinner time."

The way he said love did not help her think clearly at all. He took her hand and walked her back inside.

The ballroom had shifted again in their absence. The music had softened, the mingling had thinned, and now the great banquet table at the far end of the hall had become the center of gravity.

Massimo took his place first. But just before he sat, his eyes searched the room briefly for Carol.

And when he realized she had left the party, there was a slight dimming in his face. A private disappointment swallowed before it could become visible weakness.

Luca chose his place. He left his mother's chair vacant beside him in case she returned. Veronica sat to his right, glowing and tired and still visibly a little overwhelmed by the scale of this world. Valentina took the next seat, with Marco beside her. One by one, everyone settled in after them, conversation rising and falling in low waves.

The staff arrived with the food. As expected, Nonnina appeared separately with Luca's plate.

She set it directly in front of him.

Luca bowed his head respectfully toward her. "Grazie, Nonni."

Once everything was set, dinner began. The table was so long, no one could sensibly hold one conversation across its full length without shouting, so smaller clusters formed naturally.

Dinner went quite well. There was laughter. Little pockets of warmth. Enough good food and flowing wine. Luca was repeatedly fussed over by both Veronica and Nonnina. Marco spoke only when needed.

By the time dessert was served, Valentina had drifted fully into one of her brighter moods.

As Luca and Veronica answered more questions from the famiglia, Valentina leaned back in her chair, eyes shining with the first sparks of mischief.

Luca was mid-explanation about New York. Under the table, Valentina decided to ruin Marco's life.

She rested her hand lightly on his thigh at first. Marco barely reacted, still focused on Luca's voice.

Her fingers moved in and cupped his cock. Suddenly, Marco's breath caught. His entire body went rigid, before he forced himself to stay still, to keep his posture relaxed, to keep his face neutral.

His eyes snapped to hers. She met his look with wide, innocent eyes and the faintest shrug, as if to say what? while her fingers very much did something.

Marco leaned closer immediately, the movement disguised as casual engagement, his mouth near her ear, his breath warm against her skin. "What are you doing?" he muttered under his breath.

Val tilted her head just slightly toward him, her lips brushing close to his cheek as she answered, "Nothing. Why do you ask?"

While he was close—while his guard was down just enough—her hand shifted to finding his belt and unbuckling it with just one hand.

Marco's jaw tightened as a low groan threatened to escape him. He forced it down, swallowing hard, eyes flicking briefly across the table to make sure no one was paying too much attention.

They weren't. Valentina was dismantling him piece by piece under the table. Marco leaned back into his seat slowly, his entire nervous system had been hijacked.

He tried to focus. Tried to listen. Her hand slipped inside his pants. When her fingers finally wrapped around his warm and hard member, Marco sucked in a sharp breath. He masked it with a cough.

Her thumb brushed over the head of him before her fingers tightened and began to move.

Marco's hand gripped the edge of the table beneath the linen, knuckles tightening as he stared straight ahead, jaw locked, every muscle in his body straining as his mind went completely blank.

Valentina stroked him steadily under the table, determined to destroy every last bit of control he had left.

He reached for his glass of water, clinging to the last thread of normalcy and emptied it, set it down harder than necessary, grunted.

Marco was not new to being touched. A decade of his life had been spent navigating pleasure without attachment—Dante's girls, easy encounters and controlled indulgence. He knew his body. Knew its limits. Knew how to stay composed no matter what was happening beneath the surface.

Or at least, he had thought he did. Because in Valentina's hand, all of that control was slipping through his fingers.

Her grip was confident, she understood him already, she knew exactly how to take him apart.

Marco swallowed hard, trying to stay present but was a lost cause when her fingers were moving like that.

Every stroke sent a wave climbing up his spine, tightening his chest, making it harder to breathe, harder to think, harder to sit still.

He grabbed a piece of bread and shoved it into his mouth, using it as a desperate attempt to muffle the sound he knew was coming—the low, helpless grunt of pleasure he could feel building. His cock swelled fully in her palm and his hand shot under the table, gripping her wrist to steady it himself against the intensity of it.

The wave hit fast. His body betrayed him completely, tension snapping through him as his back straightened and his other hand slammed down against the table with a sudden force as he came in her hand.

Everything near him paused.

"Sorry..." he croaked immediately, his throat tight around the bread he was still trying to swallow.

The conversation resumed. Across from him, Luca glanced over, leaned back in his chair, gaze dropping subtly beneath the table.

When he saw Valentina's hand still angled beneath the linen, tipped just enough toward Marco, he didn't need an explanation.

He knew exactly what had just happened. A smile touched his lips as he returned to the hum, his own fingers reaching for Veronica's on the table.