

Mafia God 367

Chapter 367: I'd Like To Go Rest

Dinner wound down in layers. Chairs scraped softly against the floor as people rose. The women were guided out first and led out of the ball room to the main living room.

Veronica leaned in close to Luca as they stood. "I'd like to go rest," she said.

Luca bent just enough that his mouth brushed near her ear. "Keep the dress on for me," he whispered.

Veronica's lips curved. "I'll take the underwear off," she murmured back. "Help you unwrap your present."

Luca exhaled. "Oh, you sweet bitch... Go before I eat you up right here." He winked.

Veronica smiled and slipped away with the other women, her hips swaying just enough to make it clear she knew exactly what she was doing to him.

The room changed. What had been celebration turned seamlessly, into business. The doors were shut. The noise dampened. The men remained.

The music stopped. The Genovese famiglia gathered around the long table again, but this time the posture was different. Shoulders squared. Faces harder. Glasses of whiskey replaced wine. Laughter disappeared.

Massimo sat at the head, silent for a moment, letting the shift settle fully before anything was said.

Then the name came. "Bastiones."

Julian's shadow still lingered in the conversation. He had negotiated a temporary ceasefire, yes—but everyone in the room knew exactly what that had cost. A fraction of the Genovese empire handed over just to buy time.

Time bought with weakness. Weakness was blood in the water.

"Bastiones are pirates," one of the lieutenants muttered. "They'll want more."

"They always do," another added.

Ideas began to fly. Each suggestion was weighed, tested, discarded or set aside for later.

Luca spoke. He had been quiet until then, listening, letting the room empty itself of noise before stepping in. "Be patient," he said.

A few heads turned.

"Let them want more," he continued, his tone steady. "In the meantime, we gear up. When they come for more," he said, "we take back what's ours... and send them running."

Massimo watched his son for a long second and nodded. "Prepare," he said.

Instructions followed quickly. Every lieutenant was given orders. There would be no rushed retaliation.

This time, they would be ready. Because this time, it wasn't an ambush they were preparing for. It was war.

The Genovese had suffered a heavy loss. Too many men gone. Too many holes left behind.

Now it was time to rebuild, time to rise again. And when the Bastiones came—because they would come—the Genovese would not just meet them.

They would break them.

Luca thought Veronica would be asleep by the time he made it back to the room. He had taken longer than he wanted. The meeting had dragged on, as these things always did. By the time he pushed the bedroom door open, he expected to find Vee curled beneath the covers.

Instead, Veronica was perched on a plush white rug on the balcony, surrounded by soft pillows. Above her, a white circular dome of fine mesh hung from the ceiling and draped around her. Flowers had been woven through the fabric, spilling down in soft, delicate strands, and candles glowed safely from glass holders around the edges.

The whole setup looked like a private little world.

"What's this?"

Veronica looked up at him from inside the little floral nest, still in that yellow dress. "Apparently," she said, "your mother is quite the romantic."

Luca's eyes narrowed instantly. "That sentence concerns me."

"She got this place ready," Vee continued, "and left me a present and a note."

"What did she do?"

Veronica reached beside her and picked up a folded note. Vee cleared her throat dramatically and read aloud. "I thought you might need this tonight since Luca is currently out of commission."

His face hardened in horror. "What the fuck? Need what?"

Veronica's lips pressed together, but the laughter was already winning. "Don't panic." She reached for the gift box beside her, opened it and pulled out the gift.

Luca pointed at it. "No."

Veronica finally burst out laughing. "Yes."

"No," he repeated. "Absolutely not."

"Oh, come on."

"My mother bought you that?"

"She did."

"My mother," Luca said slowly, "bought my fiancée a clit massager because I got shot?"

Veronica wiped at the corner of her eye, laughing harder. "She's thoughtful."

"She's deranged."

"She cares about my happiness."

"I care about your happiness!"

"You also currently breathe like a haunted accordion when you do anything too tedious."

Luca looked wounded. He dragged a hand over his face, muttering something in Italian.

Veronica smiled up at him, softer now, patting the pillow beside her. "Come here, baby. You can still keep me company with your mother's toy."

"Somebody kill me now," Luca murmured.

Veronica pressed her lips together, fighting back another laugh as he stood there staring at the gift. "I really do think it's nice," she said.

But Veronica knew the little box wasn't the actual gift. The real gift was the setting. Carol had not just prepared a romantic little nest on the balcony for them. She had positioned it perfectly—beautifully, wickedly—within view of the suite opposite hers on the next floor above. Bianca's suite.

All the rooms in the mansion overlooked the inner courtyard, the building curving around itself in a wide circular embrace of balconies. Anyone standing at the right angle could see across. Could watch shadows move behind sheer curtains. Could hear laughter if the night was quiet enough.

Carol knew that. Luca, however, was still recovering from the note.

"What does she mean by out of commission?" he demanded, offended down to his soul. "I can still fuck you!" He said, eyes flashing with stubborn pride.

Veronica raised a brow. "Can you?"

His head snapped toward her.

"Without stopping to catch your breath every minute?" she asked gently. She wasn't mocking him.

He had been shot. The bullet had nicked his lung. He was still healing, no matter how beautifully he dressed or how loudly he insisted otherwise. In fact, he was still supposed to be confined to a hospital bed.

But God forbid Luciano Genovese stay in one spot for too long.