

Mafia God 376

Chapter 376: I Asked A Simple Question

If Cassidy had been right—if Luca's weakness was truly buried there, then the old woman would be the lever that moved everything else.

Luca would explain what had happened to Cassidy. Truthfully, Renato did not care much for Cassidy.

Luca and Renato had both spent years living inside the illusion of peace in New York. Renato had never overstepped too boldly because Luca's reputation was already something close to folklore—too violent to dismiss, too disciplined to provoke casually. And besides, this was New York, not Italy.

In Italy, families like theirs could move mad. Here, they had to be more careful. Luca had the careful part mastered.

The man got away with everything. Renato had spent years watching it happen—watching Luciano Genovese move through New York like he owned not just territory, but consequence itself. Deals, bodies, disappearances, retaliation, silence. Somehow Luca always remained one step ahead of anything that should have stuck to him. Even now, with word coming in that he had been arrested at the airport, Renato felt no real satisfaction.

Because he knew. Nothing would stick. Not for long. Not unless Luca was betrayed from the inside.

And that, historically, was where things became difficult. Luca's capo was a rock. That was the consensus. Marco was quiet, watchful, terrifyingly competent. A man who didn't need to be loud to make everyone around him more cautious. Rumors said Luca's real strength came from him—that Marco was the wall around Luca, the thing that made the devil of New York feel untouchable, impenetrable.

The message came then that the old woman's taxi had been ambushed. She had been successfully retrieved.

Now, he thought, it was time to wait. Luca would come to him. Renato set the phone down on the desk.

This should be good. If Cassidy was right that the old woman truly mattered as much as rumored, then Luca would be forced into concession, maybe. And Renato intended to profit.

He wondered what part of the devil's territory he would take first. Maybe this was his year.

Maybe this was the moment the balance tipped and he became the king of New York. His mouth twitched at the thought.

He had been a good little boy all these years, hadn't he? Stayed in his lane. Maintained his space. Kept the illusion of peace intact while Luca strutted around like the city itself was stitched into his suit lining.

And then the Genovese had stepped on his little toe. There was no reason, Renato thought, anyone could honestly say Luca didn't deserve what was coming.

He tapped one finger against the desk and frowned slightly. The old woman presented a problem.

How exactly was one supposed to torture an old woman? She would probably just die after five minutes. Renato found the idea deeply inconvenient. If it had been someone younger, sturdier, there were all sorts of ways to send a message. A hand. A thumb. Something memorable in a small box to make Luca understand the tone immediately.

That, frankly, would have been more entertaining. Instead, he had a fragile piece on the board and would have to be clever about it.

Renato sighed once, mildly disappointed by the limitations of age.

When Enzo entered his study that night, he did not expect to find his wife and daughter on their knees waiting for him.

He stopped in the doorway. Bianca had been back home for two days now, and in those two days Enzo had not looked at her once. What was there to look at? A daughter he had raised for duty, positioned for alliance, polished for power—and sent into the world only for her to come back ruined in every way that mattered politically.

She had disgraced him. She had disgraced the Vitale name. The marriage alliance with the Genovese had not been just a marriage of children. It had been territory. A joining of influence between two houses that had built themselves through discipline and fear. Enzo and Massimo had been friends long before they became Dons, and they had entered that arrangement with open confidence. It was supposed to solidify something powerful.

Instead, Bianca had turned it into rot. Now he had to surrender the merged territories just to save his daughter's life.

His daughter's life. The insult of that was unbearable. So what exactly was she kneeling here for?

Pity? Mercy? What was she going to say that could pull the Vitale name back out of the mud where she had dragged it?

Even now, she looked like she did not fully understand the scale of what she had cost him.

Enzo's face darkened. "I told you," he thundered, "that until I know what to do with you, I do not want to see your face!"

Spittle flew from his mouth with the violence of the outburst. He stood over them, breathing hard, the tendons in his neck standing out beneath the collar of his shirt.

Enzo looked at Bianca and saw damage. Political damage. Familial damage. And still she knelt there.

Still waiting to speak.

His wife shuffled forward on her knees and caught at his legs, clinging to him with both hands. "Enzo, please... please..." She knew exactly how unforgiving her husband could be. She had lost one child to his anger already, she wasn't planning on losing another. "Would you just listen to her side of the story?"

Enzo looked down at her. "Her side?" he snapped. "Did she or did she not betray her own husband's family?"

Bianca finally spoke then, the words rushing out before her courage could collapse under the weight of his anger. "Father, please, just let me explain."

Enzo's head turned sharply toward her. "I asked a simple question!"

The force of his roar shook the room. Bianca swallowed hard.

"It doesn't have a simple answer, Father."

That only made him angrier. His face darkened with fury.

"Did you give information to the Bastiones?" he demanded. "Yes or no!"

Bianca's breath caught. She shook her head once, then stopped, realizing too late that uncertainty only made guilt look clearer.