

Mafia God 392

Chapter 392: Pack Your Boys Up

Voss actually believed him. Not trusted him. God, no. A man had gone missing. Another man had vanished the same day.

And somewhere inside all that, someone was moving pieces on a board both of them had been too busy hating each other to study properly.

"I'm not exchanging information with you," Voss said. "If that is what you are implying."

Luca gave a faint, humourless smile. "Detective, please. I would never imply you were useful enough to be my partner. I will investigate on my own too," Luca continued, ignoring the warning, "and I hope for the sake of whoever is doing this that you get to them first."

Voss heard the threat inside them. Everyone did. "Since we are being honest about our feelings, Luciano..."

"Did you kill my father?" Voss asked.

The vendetta beneath it all had finally come alive.

"If I say no," Luca said at last, "you wouldn't believe me, Detective." Luca looked past him at the officers still scattered around the garage. "Pack your boys up," he said. "You're done with Commissioned. Have fun in the other places."

Then Luca turned and walked away.

Veronica arrived back home that evening with one clear plan: spend the rest of the day with Nonnina, avoid thinking about missing men, angry detectives, and Luca's enemies.

The house still felt strange. Beautiful, yes. Grand, absolutely but intimidating. The mansion rose around her. Marble floors, sweeping staircase, expensive vases. Every hallway smelled of wealth.

And now she lived here. Officially. The thought still made her stomach flutter. She was excited. Of course she was. Luca wanted her here. Nonnina wanted her here. Even the house staff had started looking at her with that careful respect that made her feel like she had wandered into someone else's life.

But excitement did not make unpacking any less tedious. Her things had arrived earlier that day, packed into boxes and garment bags, waiting upstairs to be sorted, folded, hung, arranged. She could already imagine Luca being useless about it.

She sighed and headed straight for the kitchen. Wide counters stretched across the room, pots hung above a central island big enough to host a small wedding, and two ovens gleamed along the wall.

A few maids were there, moving quickly and quietly around the space. Veronica stepped in, and all three women straightened almost at once.

That was going to take getting used to.

"Where is Nonnina?" she asked.

One of the maids, a young woman with dark hair pinned tightly at the back of her head, answered first. "She went upstairs to take a nap."

"Oh..." Veronica's shoulders dropped slightly. "Alright."

"Did you need something, ma'am?" another maid asked.

The maids understood from what Nonnina had repeatedly drilled into them for the better part of the day that Veronica would soon become the official lady of the house. The regime of the terrorist Bianca was over and there would soon be a breath of fresh air.

"No, thank you," Vee said. "Has it been a while since she went up?"

"About five hours ago."

"Thank you," Vee said quietly. She turned away from the kitchen and walked back through the dining area. The long table sat polished and perfect beneath the chandelier, set as if the family might gather at any moment. Beyond it, the living room stretched wide and elegant.

Vee crossed it quickly. She reached the staircase, her hand slid along the banister as she climbed. Vee reached the hallway and stopped outside Nonnina's door. She knocked lightly. "Nonni?" She knocked again, harder this time. "Nonnina?"

Slowly, Vee pushed the door open. The room was bright from the light through the open windows. A teacup sat untouched on the small table near the window. One of Nonnina's shawls had fallen across the arm of a chair. The bed was still made.

Then Vee saw Nonnina. Her heart dropped so violently it felt like it had left her body. Nonnina was lying on the ground.

"Nonnina!" Vee screamed so loudly the sound tore at her throat. She raced across the room and dropped to her knees beside the old woman, gathering her carefully. "Nonni, no, no, no—wake up." Her hands shook as she lifted Nonnina's head. "Please wake up. Please."

"Somebody help!" Vee screamed toward the door. "Help, please! Anybody!"

The house was too big. Too grand. Too fucking large. Her voice seemed to disappear into the hallways, swallowed by distance.

"Help!" she screamed again, louder, rawer.

Panic shoved her to her feet. She stumbled to the small table near the bed, grabbed the phone with shaking hands and dialled quickly, breath breaking apart as she screamed into the receiver for help.

She dropped the phone back onto the table and returned to Nonnina. She pulled the old woman into her arms again, rocking slightly without realising it. "No," she whispered. "No." Her tears came hard then, blurring the room. She didn't want to register that Nonnina's body had gone cold in her arms. She didn't want to believe how stiff she was. She didn't even want to notice that her skin was pale already. She just wanted her on her feet, yelling, making her that cursed fertility tea and muttering curses in Italian.

Footsteps thundered through the hall. For one wild, useless second, Vee thought the sound might wake Nonnina. That the old woman would jerk upright, slap someone's hand away and curse them all for making noise in her room.

But she did not move.

The door flew open. Two guards rushed in first, followed by three maids, their faces drained of colour.

"Help her, please!" Vee screamed, her voice breaking. "Do something, please!"

Nobody wasted time asking questions.

One of the guards knelt beside her, his face tight with shock. "Ma'am, let me—"

"No, be careful," Vee snapped, clutching Nonnina closer for half a second before sense returned through the panic. "Please. Please be careful."

"We will," he said.

Together, they eased Nonnina from Veronica's arms. The moment her weight left Vee's lap, something inside her seemed to tear loose. She reached after her automatically, fingers trembling, as if the old woman might vanish if she let go completely.