

Mafia God 395

Chapter 395: She Was A Great Woman

"Nonnina..." Marco began, then stopped.

Luca's throat moved. Marco looked down at the concrete floor, searching for the right words and finding none. What did a man say about a woman like her? That she was kind? Terrifying?

"She was a great woman," Marco said finally.

Luca shut his eyes.

"She..." Marco drew in a shaky breath and looked away. "I'm gonna miss her."

Whatever thin thread Luca had used to keep himself together snapped. His face twisted once, violently, like he was trying to swallow the grief back down. Then the sound came out of him—raw, broken, ugly.

He cried. No, he bawled. He turned onto his side, one hand pressed over his face. His shoulders shook. His breath broke apart. Every sob seemed dragged out of the deepest part of him. He had known someday she would leave him. She was old. She had lived many lives inside one body.

But knowing was useless. Knowing did not prepare him for this. He wasn't ready. He wasn't ready at all.

He had no idea what to do without her. She was his nanny, and he wasn't ashamed to say it. At thirty-one years old, with blood on his hands and men who obeyed his word, he still needed her. Needed her voice. Her prayers. Her insults. Her hands fussing over his collar. Her threats to beat him.

She was his family. She had loved him unconditionally, even when they didn't share blood.

Marco pushed away from the wall and extended a hand. Luca took it. Marco pulled him to his feet and wrapped his arms around him. He held Luca tighter, his own eyes burning now. "I'm sorry, Luca."

They stood there for a couple of minutes. Maybe longer. Time inside the holding cell had become useless. Luca's body still shook in Marco's arms, though the worst of the sobbing had passed. His breathing remained uneven.

Marco held him without speaking. There was nothing to say. Then a voice sliced through the quiet.

"Isn't this cute?" Voss stood outside the cell, one hand tucked into his coat pocket, the other holding a folder. "You boys need some privacy?" Voss drawled.

Marco released Luca slowly, but he stepped immediately into Voss's line of sight, blocking him from seeing too much. Luca turned away slightly, dragging the heel of his palm across his face, trying to gather the pieces of himself before anyone could use them against him.

"Not the time, Detective," Marco said.

Voss looked between them then sighed and unlocked the cell door. The metal gave a loud, ugly clank. "You are free to go."

Marco frowned. "Why? It should be at least a forty-eight-hour hold."

"You want to stay?" Voss pulled the door open wider. "Just say thank you and get the fuck out of here."

Marco glanced at Luca, then stepped out first. Luca followed. His face had returned to that terrible stillness, but his eyes were red, his lashes damp, his mouth bruised from the fight.

Voss watched him pass then he reached out and stopped Luca with a grip on his arm. Marco tensed immediately.

Luca turned his head slowly, looking down at Voss's hand before lifting his gaze to the detective's face.

"What you feel, right now..." He tightened his grip just slightly. "That's what others feel when you kill someone they love."

Luca's hand balled into a fist. Marco had spent half his life reading Luca's moods from the smallest signs—the tilt of his head, the stillness in his shoulders, the silence before violence.

And that fist meant trouble. Marco stepped between Luca and Voss, broad shoulders blocking the line of fire.

"Don't," Marco said under his breath.

Luca's eyes stayed fixed on Voss then snatched his arm away. He glared at Voss, then turned and walked toward the front desk where their belongings were being returned in plastic trays.

Voss watched them go. His face held no triumph, but no regret either. Only that restless, hungry look he always wore around Luciano Genovese.

Captain Harrington joined him a moment later. "You could have kept him," Harrington said.

Voss did not look at him. "No."

Harrington raised a brow.

"I want him out there making more mistakes."

Across the room, Luca signed for his possessions, jaw tight, eyes dead ahead. Marco collected his own things beside him.

Voss's gaze stayed on Luca. "How is that warrant coming?" he asked.

Harrington sighed. "You're not getting it."

Voss finally turned to him. "Cap..."

"No."

"Cap," Voss whined.

"You need probable cause," Harrington said.

"She is his girlfriend. That's probable cause enough."

"No, it is not."

"She lives with him. She is tied to him. She was Cassidy's ex girlfriend. You don't think there's something there?"

"I think there may be something there," Harrington said evenly. "That is not the same as probable cause."

Voss dragged a hand down his face. "Cap, this is the closest I have gotten to Luciano. I need more."

"And if you go at him sloppy, you'll lose what little ground you have. You know that. Don't act like a rookie because you're desperate."

Voss looked away, jaw working.

"Find a reason and come back," Harrington said. "You'll get a warrant."

Valentina and Veronica heard about the fight much later, when they were finally leaving the hospital and found Luca and Marco's cars still sitting in the parking lot.

At first, Veronica only stared at them. Her mind was too heavy to understand what she was looking at. Her throat hurt from crying. Her eyes were swollen, her head pounding, and deep in her stomach was that tight, painful knot that came after too much screaming, too much grief. She felt wrung out. Hollow.

Then one of the guards, looking deeply uncomfortable, explained. Luca and Marco had fought.

Then the police had taken them. She did not have the energy to argue. So when they got back home, she went to bed.

Valentina, however, waited in the living room. When Luca and Marco arrived, both looked like shit, she was already standing in the middle of the room with her arms crossed over her chest.