

Mafia God 415

Chapter 415: People Will Stay Away

"How long now? Three? Four?" Vee asked.

"Thereabouts..." Val answered, waving vaguely.

Vee laughed quietly and folded a dress into the suitcase. "It will be here before you know it."

"I have been meaning to ask you," Val said, folding a dress with unnecessary care. "What next with the pizza parlour?"

Vee paused with a blouse in her hand.

Val glanced at her. "We really haven't had the time to pick everything back up since that attack months ago. Tony informed me the workers were done fixing the damages."

Vee looked down at the blouse, smoothing her fingers over the fabric. The pizza parlour. For months, it had been sitting in the back of her mind.

Everything about it felt complicated.

"We were supposed to have your engagement party with Ricardo there," Vee said quietly. "That's why I wanted us to fix it." Vee swallowed and placed the blouse into the suitcase. "But I don't know if we can save it, Val."

"What do you mean?"

Vee let out a tired breath and sat on the edge of the bed. "People think I am a murderer. What are the chances we will get customers?" She asked. "Even if we reopen, people will stay away. With the baby coming, you will be busy. And I..." She hesitated. "I will be busy with the famiglia."

Val slowly lowered the scarf in her hand.

"Between both of us, we will have no time," Vee continued quickly. "We should just sell it."

"What are you saying?" she asked. "What do you mean busy with the famiglia?"

"It's just famiglia stuff," Vee replied. "Helping Luca out."

"With what?" Val asked. "Shooting people?"

Vee's head snapped up. "Hey, what's gotten into you?"

Val looked away first, suddenly very interested in folding a nightdress that had already been folded.

"You..." Vee narrowed her eyes. "You are acting weird."

"I'm sorry," Val said quickly. "Hormones."

Vee gave her a dry look. "That can't be an excuse for everything, you know."

Val smiled faintly. "It's a convenient one. I use it all the time with Marco. It works."

Vee's mouth twitched, but her gaze stayed on her sister. "You guys talked about getting married yet?"
Vee asked, reaching for another dress and folding it neatly into the suitcase.

Val allowed the subject change. "Yeah. We were thinking once we get to New York."

Vee looked up. "Really?"

"That is if another tragedy doesn't put a wrench in the plans."

The joke landed poorly, because it wasn't really a joke. Vee's fingers paused over the dress.

Then she forced a small smile. "I will include that in my daily prayers."

"At this point, we need to hire a priest full time," Val murmured.

Vee watched her, taking in the way Val kept smoothing the same corner of the dress. Vee understood.

How could she not? Nonnina had been a gem to all of them. Her absence had settled over everyone differently. Luca carried it. Vee carried it. Maybe Val was carrying it too.

And who was Vee to tell Val to talk? The first thing she had done was shut everyone out. She had no leg to stand on here.

So, she kept quiet and continued with the chore. Maybe Marco would have better luck with her.

For a while, only the soft sound of clothes being folded filled the room. Dresses went into the suitcase. Shoes were wrapped. Toiletries were gathered.

Then Val spoke again.

"I'm not selling the pizza parlour."

Vee paused. "Val..."

"No. I'm serious."

Vee set the dress down slowly. "I didn't say we had to decide today."

"It's the only thing of our family we have left, along with the house," she said. "We cannot just sell it." Val continued, voice growing stronger. "If we sell it, then what do we have left? I love Marco. I do. And I know Luca loves you. But I don't want everything we are to become something they gave us."

Val lifted both hands and made air quotes. "Then we would be at the mercy of the inner circle of the famiglia."

The pizza parlour had been theirs before the men. It was not glamorous. It was not powerful. But it was theirs.

Vee exhaled slowly. "Fine," she said. "What do you want to do?"

"Tony can manage it, at least," Val suggested. "And when we both can," Val continued, "we stop by to see how it's going. Because we don't really depend on its income anymore doesn't mean we shouldn't still have something that is just ours."

Vee looked toward the open suitcase, the folded clothes, the little pieces of their lives being packed and moved again. "Okay," Vee said with resignation. "Whatever you want."

Val narrowed her eyes. "You have to want it too."

"I want whatever you want. How's that?"

Val considered this. "Good enough."

Then she lay back on the bed with a dramatic sigh, one arm flung over her face.

Vee stared at her. "Are you helping me finish packing or have you retired?"

"I am pregnant."

"And?"

"And that is my answer to everything until this child leaves my body."

Vee shook her head, but she smiled as she reached for another dress.

Marco was thrown into wedding preparations as soon as they landed in New York. Thrown, dragged, kidnapped.

Honestly, if wedding plans were left to men alone, it would be beer in everyone's hands at a bar, a priest dragged in for five minutes, maybe some meat on a grill, and everyone home before midnight.

Women, however, always wanted to complicate things. Flowers had meanings. Colours had moods. Napkins had textures. Cake had tiers. Chairs needed covers. Tables needed arrangements. Apparently, one could not simply say, People will sit where they find space and eat what is placed in front of them.

No. That was barbarism. But what Vee and Val didn't realise was that while they were busy dragging him left, right, and centre for wedding preparations, Marco was planning the Donna's initiation.