

Mafia God 431

Chapter 431: Luca Is Just Being Protective

Vee's smile thinned slightly.

David continued, "I apologise if you feel ambushed or something. I was merely trying to find my footing in the neighbourhood."

"Luca is just being protective."

"I noticed."

"He seems scarier than he actually is," Vee said.

David raised a brow. The look on his face said he did not believe a single word of that. Vee couldn't blame him. Luca did not exactly move through the world like a harmless man unfairly misunderstood by society. He wore danger too well. Even when he smiled, there was usually a threat sitting somewhere behind it, polished and waiting.

"He has layers," she added.

"I'm sure he does," David said dryly. "And I am sure his bottom layer is still dangerous."

"Look," Vee said, softening her tone, "I will speak to him, okay? I'm sure it's nothing unless he does have a good reason to be wary."

David studied her. "Do you always have your guard up with new people?"

Once, the answer would have been no. But now? New people came with shadows. Smiles came with question marks. Even harmless business conversations had to be weighed against everything she had learned from Luca's world.

Vee gave a dismissive wave. "I'll get back to you, okay? But if you still feel uncomfortable," she continued, "we do not have to work together."

"I'm not uncomfortable," he said. "I'm just careful."

Vee nodded once. "Smart."

"I want you both to be in agreement," he said. "I hate to be in the middle of a marital squabble."

"Of course. Have a nice day."

"See you," David said. He gave her one last polite nod, then walked over to his car.

Vee watched him go for a moment. He did look harmless. But then again, Luca made everyone look suspicious. A priest could offer her holy water and Luca would ask where the bottle had been sourced. She turned away and entered Scalese Pizza.

The bell jingled above her head. Tony looked up from the counter, surrounded by rough sketches, tape measurements, and a notebook full of expansion ideas.

"Come on," she said. "Let's finish the arrangements for the expansion."

By the time they were done, the back of Scalese Pizza had become a battlefield of sketches, measurements, and budgets.

After that, she went to her self-defence class. By the time she headed home, her muscles ached.

When she arrived, Luca was already home, in the kitchen, supervising dinner. Vee stopped at the doorway and smiled.

There he stood, sleeves rolled up, one hand resting on the counter while two maids and the cook moved around.

Vee had to press her lips together to keep from laughing. He was really taking the domestic role seriously. In the absence of Nonnina, Luca had apparently appointed himself Commander of Dinner Affairs, which mostly meant he stood around looking dangerous while people cooked.

He turned once the maids moved away and immediately spotted her. His face softened. "Hey, Donna."

Vee walked up to him, rose on her toes, and kissed him. "Didn't know you would be home early."

"Still have to catch up on some sleep."

"Right." She gave him a knowing look.

He kissed her again, one hand settling at her waist. "How was training?"

"Painful."

"Good. Pain means progress."

Vee rolled her eyes, then they both walked out of the kitchen. "So, I ran into my neighbour today. He seems to think you have a problem with him," she said.

"I was just checking him out."

"And?"

Luca looked toward the dining area, then back at her. "I don't know what to think."

"Are you sure it's not because of what I said about him?" Vee asked.

"No," he said. "I promise. I am a jealous man, Bambola, not a stupid one."

She smiled and reached across the table, snatching an apple from the fruit bowl.

"I don't like to leave anything to chance when it comes to you," Luca continued. "If he feels threatened, that's his problem."

Vee bit into the apple. "Tell me what you feel about him."

Luca leaned against the table, arms folding across his chest. "He had heard rumours, I guess, about the girlfriend of the big, bad wolf next door. And yet, he didn't seem like a frightened pig."

She shook her head. "Hmmm... I got a different sense while he spoke to me. He seemed uncomfortable."

"But not frightened?"

Vee paused. She replayed David's face in her mind. The careful tone. The politeness. He had seemed cautious, yes. Perhaps uncomfortable. But afraid?

No. Not afraid.

"No," she admitted. "No... maybe because he feels he has no reason to be frightened. Maybe Voss promised him protection just to be able to sell the property."

Luca's jaw tightened slightly at the detective's name.

"Voss sold him the place," she reminded him.

"I remember."

"And Voss hates you."

"That too, I remember."

"So maybe David thinks he has police protection."

"I thought that too," Luca said, his expression tightening. "Might explain the feeling I'm getting."

Vee frowned around another bite of apple. "I don't understand. You want people to be afraid of you from the get-go?"

"No. Not exactly. With what he already knew, he was relaxed. Calm."

"Maybe he's just not easily intimidated."

"He had heard rumours. He knew about the previous owner. And still, when I walked into his office, he sat there like I was interrupting his afternoon."

Vee swallowed her bite slowly. "Maybe he feels he has nothing to hide. Did you look him up?" she asked.

"Working on it. I don't have his last name. Would be easier."

"Damn it," Vee muttered. "I don't even know his first name. I just handed him over to Tony." Vee took another bite of the apple and shrugged. "Maybe Tony knows. I'll call him later."

"I gotta shower. I smell like sweat."

"Hurry up. I'm hungry."

Vee raised a brow moving away. "For?"

Luca tilted his head, his grin spreading with wicked ease. "Is that a trick question?"

"You might get lucky if you answer correctly." She winked.