

Mafia God 436

Chapter 436: Let Me Handle This

He was supposed to be inside. He was supposed to be beside Marco, watching the man who had stood with him through everything finally take something good for himself. He was supposed to hear the vows. He was supposed to be with his family.

Instead, he was outside at the gate, waiting for Voss to make a stupid move. And God help him, a small part of him wanted the man to try.

The patrol car arrived. Two officers stepped out and immediately took in the scene: the church, the gathered Genovese guards, the line of black cars, Voss red-faced beside his vehicle, and Luca standing like a grenade that needed the pin pulled.

Their enthusiasm died quickly. Voss spoke to them in low, urgent tones, pointing toward the church.

No one wanted to take Luca on. Besides, the church was filled with members of the famiglia. Men who had left their weapons in places where God might not see, but could still reach them fast enough if needed. Luca had an army, and everyone present knew he was not afraid to use it.

Minutes crawled. Then one of Luca's men approached from the church steps and gave a small nod.

The vows were done. Marco and Val were married. Only then did Luca's stance loosen. Enough for the worst edge of violence to lower from his shoulders.

He turned from Voss and headed back toward the church entrance, ready to reclaim what remained of the day.

Veronica was already hurrying outside. "Luca! Luca..." She hurried down the church steps, one hand lifting the hem of her dress so she wouldn't trip. Her face was calm enough for anyone else, but Luca saw past it immediately. He saw the tightness at her mouth, the sharp scan of her eyes, the way her fingers flexed.

"What's going on?" she asked.

Luca stepped toward her at once, blocking her view of the gate with his body. "Go back inside."

"Don't. What is going on?"

The church doors behind her were still open, and from inside came the muffled sound of applause, soft laughter, the rustle of people rising. Marco and Val were married. That was the only good thing about this nightmare.

Luca exhaled. "Voss wants to place you both under arrest."

"What?"

"I don't know why. I just stalled until the vows were done."

"Me and Val?"

"Yeah."

The colour shifted in her face.

Luca touched her arm. "I need Marco to make some calls to keep that from happening."

"No," she said quickly. "Wait. Just let me talk to Voss."

"Absolutely fucking not."

"Let me handle this."

"Do you hear yourself?"

"Luca, listen to me."

"I am listening. I hate everything I'm hearing."

She stepped closer, lowering her voice. "It doesn't have to escalate. And if you keep looking like you're about to burn down the churchyard, it will get worse."

Luca's jaw locked. One wrong move, and the wedding would become a war story.

"Stay with Marco and Val. Let them have a peaceful wedding, please. That's all I ask."

His face tightened. "I cannot let you go."

"Then don't watch. Go."

Luca looked toward Voss, and the violence in his eyes returned.

"Go inside," she said. "Stand beside your brother. Let Val have pictures where no one is bleeding in the background. You can fix this later, not now."

Luca grabbed her face and kissed her hard. It was a desperate and angry kiss. His hands held her tight.

When he pulled back, his forehead rested against hers.

"I'll be there as soon as I can," he said.

Vee nodded. He did not like it. She saw that clearly. Every line of his body was fighting the decision. Every instinct in him wanted to drag her back inside, throw her over his shoulder if necessary, and dare Voss to follow.

He turned and walked back into the church. Vee watched him go only long enough to make sure he didn't change his mind and come storming back out. Then she lifted the hem of her dress, and hurried toward Voss.

"You truly are making an effort at being despicable," Vee said.

"Miss Scalese, I am placing you under arrest for the murders of Cassidy and Ricardo."

So it was true then. Her chest tightened, but she refused to show it.

"Leave my sister out of whatever this is," she said.

Voss tilted his head. "If you answer my questions honestly."

"Sure."

Voss stepped closer with the cuffs. Vee turned around with her hands behind her back. The cold metal closed around them with a sharp click. Voss guided her toward the patrol car.

She climbed in carefully, her dress gathering awkwardly around her knees, the metal cuffs biting into her wrists. Through the window, she could still see the church. Her sister was married.

That was enough.

"Where is Vee?" Val asked as soon as they left the church. Her hand was still wrapped around Marco's, her veil floating behind her, her cheeks flushed with the glow of new marriage. Moments ago, she had been smiling so wide it looked like joy might split her open and Marco had kissed her like he had finally found his way home.

They were supposed to head to the reception for the after party. But Val's eyes were already searching.

"She was just here," she said, turning toward the church steps. "Where is she?"

"She's been arrested," Luca said. "I'm on my way there now. Marco—"

"What?" Val cut in. "What... what... hold on one fucking second!" Her hand tightened around Marco's. "Don't keep speaking as if I am not supposed to have a reaction," she snapped, her eyes shining with panic. "My sister was just here. Now you're telling me she's been arrested?"

Luca exhaled, trying to keep his own temper buried long enough not to frighten her further. "Detective Voss was here to disrupt the wedding."

Marco stepped closer, his hand moving to her back. "Sweetie, breathe."

Before Luca could speak again, Tony pushed through the gathering crowd, breathless, suit jacket half-buttoned, hair slightly dishevelled.